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THE FLYING DUTCHMAN OF 1880; Or, WHO WAS VANDERDECKEN?

A TRUE STORY TOLD BY THE SURVIVORS OF THE AMERICAN CLIPPER "SPINDRIFT."

BY CAPTAIN FRED. WHITTAKER,

AUTHOR OF "NEMO, KING OF THE TRAMPS," "RED RUDIGER," "THE RUSSIAN SPY," "THE RED RAJAH," "THE IRISH CAPTAIN," "THE MAN IN RED," "DEATH'S HEAD CUIRASSIERS," "PHANTOM KNIGHTS," ETC., ETC.



THEN THE WILD LASCAR UTTERED A SHOUT, PLUCKED A KNIFE FROM HIS GIRDLE, AND STABBED HIMSELF TO THE HEART.
FALLING BACK INTO THE SEA.

The Flying Dutchman of 1880.

OR,
Who Was Vanderdecken?

A True Story Told by the Survivors of
the American Clipper "Spindrift."

BY CAPT. FRED. WHITTAKER,
AUTHOR OF "THE MAD HUSSARS," "THE UNKNOWN
SPORT," ETC., ETC.

PART I.

THE CAPTAIN'S STORY.

I AM going to tell a story some people will say is a lie. I can't help that. What I've seen I know, and I've seen the Flying Dutchman within three years. Who he is, I don't know. All the people in the United States can call me a liar if they want to, but they can't knock what I've seen out of me. He brought me ruin whenever he came, and I believe he's sailing the Indian Ocean to-night, if the Evil One, his master has not called him home. Read my story, and judge for yourselves whether I haven't told the truth.

JOHN HUTTON,
Master Mariner,
Sailor's Snug Harbor, 1883.

EDITOR'S NOTE.

Having known Captain Hutton for thirty years, and having always found him to be a man of strict veracity, I am willing to certify that I think he believes everything he has written down in his log of the Spindrift to be exactly true. The worthy captain wished me to go over his manuscript, on account of my being, as he expressed it, "a regular ink-slinger," with a view to putting in the necessary amount of "dictionary words," to give to his tale the respectability and dignity which he believes wait on words of three or more syllables. After a careful perusal of his efforts, I have concluded that the public would be better satisfied if I let the captain tell his story in his own homely style, and therefore I have confined myself to cutting his nautical phraseology at times, and adding a few notes and explanations here and there, in the light of facts that have since come to my knowledge from certain passengers of the "Spindrift."

To make matters as clear as may be I also introduce the stories of these passengers in their own words, only concealing their identity under fictitious names.

THE EDITOR.

CHAPTER I.

THE FLYING DUTCHMAN.

THERE is something about the sea that grows on a man, the longer he lives on it. Many a time have I thought I'd leave it and stay on land the rest of my life, after a special hard voyage, when we had head-winds, calms and storms, one after the other; hail and sleet freezing on the running rigging when the men went aloft to reef topsails, a two months' run from Liverpool to New York in the dead of winter, keeping Christmas, lying to under bare poles, with the fore topmast gone over the side and the galley-fire put out by the seas.

Just about that time I've felt that the fellow who wrote about "a life on the ocean wave" ought to have had his head dipped in a tar bucket. And when I've got home to my little house on West street, in the old Ninth Ward, where I was born, every thing has seemed so quiet and peaceful that I've fairly cried when I thought I had to leave it all and go to sea again.

But at last, when I tried living ashore, going into the ship-chandlery business, it wasn't six months before I got so restless and uneasy like, hearing my old mates telling sea stories round the stove, that finally I said to Maria: "It won't do. Old dogs can't learn new tricks. You carry on the business for the kids. You're as good at it as I am. I'm going to sea again."

And that's how I came to be out in the Indian Ocean, only three years ago last January, on the quarter-deck of the Spindrift, going to Batavia for coffee with the hold full of Yankee notions, and a table full of passengers in the cabin.

The Spindrift was an A1 clipper, copper-fastened, two thousand tons register—which means twelve hundred burden in a clipper—and we had a strong enough crew to handle her comfortably, forty-three, all told.

My first mate, Falker, was a very good man; my second, Lyons, a sea-dog of the old kind; and the third mate was a young chap I didn't like at all at first, though I came to think different of him before I'd done with him. His name was Clarence Denyse, and perhaps that was one of the reasons I didn't like him. A sailor called Clarence seems out of his place. He might as well be called Augustus at once, and have done with it.

As for the men, they were a hard lot, very different to what they were when I first went to sea, forty years ago.

Out of the whole gang there was only one born Yankee, and he was worth all the rest put together. He was a Bedford man, an old whaler, and his name was Ike Hackett.

The others were Danes, English, Germans and what not. The Danes and Norwegians were the best sailors, and the worst men to handle of all, for temper.

Then I had a lot of passengers.

There was old Mr. Mungo Bruce, who was one of our owners. He'd spent so many years down by the docks in a dusty old office that he knew every rope on a ship almost as well as a sailor, as far as the name went; though, as to handling them, he was as ignorant as any other land-lubber.

He'd never been at sea in his life, though he was part owner of more than a dozen ships, and had been in the China and Java trade for sixty years, man and boy. Bruce, Hilton & Co., was the firm, and he was a sleeping partner in the house he had entered as an errand boy sixty years before.

He had come out with me—curious thing—to peruse a little girl, his granddaughter, who, they said, was to be his heiress. She was with him, and a sweet little thing she was, just eighteen, with a face like a baby, and big brown eyes that looked odd beside her curls, for they were nearly white, with a tinge of yellow in them, like the color of a sandy beach on a hot day, before the tide comes in.

Bruce was a regular driver in his prime; a Scotchman to the backbone; could squeeze blood out of a stone, they used to say; but little Mame Bruce did what she liked with him.

Then there was the Hyatt family; three of them, father, mother and son. The old folks had money, and the boy knew it and made it fly, you can just bet your last dollar, whenever he got a chance.

His name was worse than Augustus. I hope to die if they hadn't called him Cyril Adolphus; and he well deserved the name. He was the only one of my whole table-full I didn't like; but I put up with him for the sake of his father, who'd done me many a kindness in days gone by when he was in the Liverpool Packet Line. He'd gone out of that long before though, and was living on his rents in the Ninth ward—a thing I probably never shall do myself.

Then there was a couple I liked very well, though I felt kind of sorry for them both, Dr. and Mrs. Peters, with thirty years between them.

The doctor was set in his ways, and his wife was as lively as a cricket. He was at his books all day, and she made the piano rattle from morning till night, when she wasn't flirting with some one or trying to make mischief.

A pretty little woman too, as plump as a partridge, black eyes and hair, tongue hung in the middle (as the saying goes), and so on.

Then there were two young men going to Batavia, for their own good or some one else's, and that, with the ship's officers, made up our table.

Sam Peters was one—a nephew of the doctor, and a doctor himself, as far as a parchment could make him one. I wouldn't have liked to trust him, for all his big box of knives and his talk about bones and nerves.

I've noticed that these young doctors talk a good deal more than the old ones. Sam was going out to establish himself in Batavia.

I believe his uncle was taking him there on purpose to get him dropped where he wouldn't be coming back to see his aunt by marriage any more, for Doctor Sam had the most affectionate ways about that young aunt of his I ever saw in a step-nephew.

The other young man was a sort of a distant relative of old Bruce, a Scotch fellow by the name of Mungo Johnston. He always called Bruce his "kinsman," and the old man didn't stop him, for he never presumed on the relationship, and I verily believe would have blacked Bruce's boots, if the old fellow had ordered him.

He was one of the homeliest fellows I ever laid eyes on, and one of the smartest. He was going to Batavia to take charge of the branch-house there, for the firm of Bruce, Hilton & Co., and everybody seemed to like him, in spite of his ugly face. Except one person, his twenty-fifth cousin, Mame Bruce. Any one could see she hated him like poison, though he fairly worshipped the planks she walked on.

There was our ship's company, passengers and all, fifty-three souls on the good ship Spindrift, in latitude 12°, 47', south, and 77°, 23', east longitude, from Greenwich, between the Chagos Islands and Apaturia, heading east-nor-east for the Straits of Sunda, in January, 1880, when we first sighted the Flying Dutchman and started things going into what has made this story.

It was four bells in the first watch—ten o'clock at night as they call it on land—and all the passengers were still on deck, smoking and chatting before going to bed. Miss Mame Bruce—she was a spoiled child, with all her pretty ways—was lying in a grass hammock I had slung for her from the mizen rigging, with her maid, Inez Diaz, at her head, fanning her. I used to pity that poor little maid sometimes, much as I liked Mame. With all their coaxing ways these girls can be quite cruel to their servants, and Inez was a poor Spanish girl, who had come into the Bruce family—Lord knows how; I didn't know—and occupied the place of a sort of half maid, half companion, to Miss Mame. And I tell you she had to earn her wages, if ever a girl did.

She'd been standing there fanning Miss Perfection since the second dog-watch, and Mame didn't so much as tell her she could go to bed, though Inez was ready to drop. The old man, Bruce, had a big cane arm-chair; and the rest of the folks were scattered about on camp stools.

It had been a terrible hot day, with very little wind; and the night didn't come on much cooler. The moon was new, and the sky hadn't so much as a speck of cloud to dim the stars. We'd watched the little silver crescent drop into the horizon, carrying the dull red globe of the old moon in her arms, and after she'd gone, it seemed as if the sky turned a darker blue, nearly black, while the twinkling points of light got dimmer, and ceased to blaze. There was no sea on; nothing but a smooth ground-swell, that we didn't notice much; and what wind there was came due west from off Africa, as hot as if it blew out of the mouth of an oven. There was just enough of it to keep the sails from flapping, and we'd piled every rag on the old Spindrift up to her moon-rakers, with the stunsails set, aloft and aloft, till the hull of the ship looked no bigger than a toy-boat under the white pyramids of canvas. Ike Hackett was at the wheel and I was just looking up at the sails, and thinking what a lovely thing a clipper ship is under a press of canvas, when I heard the lookout sing out:

"Sail ho!"

"Whereaway?" I called out, for I couldn't see any sail, and it didn't seem to me any one else could in the night, unless she were close aboard.

"Dead ahead, sir," he answered, and I knew the voice of Lars Nelson, one of my Danes, a first-rate sailor, but the worst fellow for fighting I ever came across.

The passengers began to get up and peep over the rail; but the sails ahead interrupted the view, and I told Ike Hackett to yaw a point or two, to give us a chance to see from the quarter.

The sails flapped as the ship's head swept round, and I saw a sight I'd never seen before.

A ship in full sail, shining all over, sails and all, with a blue, ghostly flame, coming straight toward us, dead in the wind's eye!

And that wasn't the strangest part of her either, for, as I'm a living man, I could see the ribs and framing of that ship, with never a plank to cover them, all fiery. And her sails looked like cobwebs, for I could see the masts and rigging through them, and every rope and spar gleamed with a blue flame.

I only looked one instant, and then the rattling of the blocks over my head told me that it wouldn't do to yaw without trimming sails; so I sung out:

"Hands by the braces! Trim in your star-board sheets! Board your port tacks. Lively, now!"

And the Spindrift altered her course, so as to give every one aboard a view of this terrible-looking stranger, who seemed to be less than a quarter of a mile off, heading straight for us.

The passengers could see that there something strange about her, for a man can't come from New York to the Indian Ocean on a sailing-ship without learning something about the sea. Even little Mame Bruce could tell that it wasn't natural for a ship to be sailing dead into the wind's eye; and the fiery look of this strange ship was the most terrible thing of all.

As for myself, I didn't know what to make of it. I'm not given to believing much of anything, and I'd put down all the stories I'd heard of the Flying Dutchman as just yarns. I'd never met the man who had seen her, though I'd seen old sailors that swore they had. But when I came to question them, I had always found out that they had just come out of port—and I know what "Jack Ashore" is too well not to lay the whole yarn to a fit of the jim-jams.

But there were no jimjams about this fiery ship. The Spindrift was run on temperance principles. And even allowing I was drunk myself, the whole ship's crew weren't drunk too, and the lady passengers weren't—sure!

But every living soul on the Spindrift saw the Flying Dutchman coming on toward us on that dark night, and you needn't ask if we were scared at the thing.

I'm no coward myself, though I don't like to blow my own horn, but I tell you I could feel my hair standing up as this fiery thing came gliding over the smooth, oily swells of the sea.

Not a soul was able to say a word aboard the Spindrift after the first sight of the stranger. I heard old Bruce mutter:

"My God! what's that?"

And Mame cried out faintly:

"Oh! oh! Grandpa!"

Then every one was silent, and I could see them slowly rising up from their chairs, staring at the awful thing as if they'd been struck dumb.

Forward by the knight-heads, I could see the men gathered in a dark knot, and could tell, from the low murmur of their voices, that they were all discussing the fiery ship in sailor style.

No need to tell them who it was. A man can't ship before the mast for a month without

hearing of the Flying Dutchman, though most sailors believe that he hasn't been seen for a good fifty years. And on came the ship straight towards us, till she wasn't more than two cable-lengths away, and the silence on our ship had become so intense that you might have heard a pin drop, when I heard a sort of a groan aloft in our fore-top, and then the men by the knight-heads burst into a cry of terror as I saw a black object fall from the fore-topgallant cross-trees.

I knew what it was before it struck the deck, though the sickening thud and squash that I heard turned my stomach. *The lookout had fallen from the mast-head!*

In another minute every soul aboard the Spindrift seemed to have burst into one great cry of horror and fear as the fiery stranger came on, silent as ever, with the waves dashing up green billows of flame against the pale blue of her corpse-like hull, and it seemed as if she was bound to run us down.

And at the sound of that cry, while women were screaming, men shouting and cursing, and every one looking as if they were going stark crazy on board the Spindrift; up into the rigging of the fiery ship leaped a number of black figures, with blue flames all round them, and the stranger swept past our stern, and on into the wind's eye without so much as a sound out of her. And then came a puff of wind as hot as if just out of a furnace, and struck us full on our pyramid of sail with a force that sent us over on our beam ends; while I heard the cracking of sticks that told me some of our stunsail booms were going, if not worse.

Of course, that put all thoughts of the Flying Dutchman out of our heads for awhile, and by the time I'd got the men out on the yards, taken in the light kites and got the ship into safer canvas, the fiery stranger had gone—vanished, disappeared out of sight—clean as if she'd never been there, though there was no mist on the sea, not a cloud in the sky, and the water was clear all round us.

And where that fiery hot puff of wind came from was another puzzle. It lasted nearly two minutes, carried away five of our booms, and sprung the main sky-sail mast, yet it came out of a clear sky, and left the sea as oily as ever.

When the muzz was all over, and the passengers busy jabbering over the incident, I went forward to see who had been killed.

I didn't let the passengers know what had happened, though one or two of them possibly suspected it, and the bustle of getting in the light sails had taken off their attention from the man who fell from the cross-trees.

When I went past the fore-hatch I saw that the men had laid the body out on the hatch cover, and covered it decently with a long watch-coat, while several old sailors were gathered round it, whispering to each other, and the third mate, Denyse, was just putting back a flap of the coat as if he'd been inspecting the corpse.

"Who is it, Mr. Denyse?" I said.

"It's poor Ole Nelson, sir," he answered. "Lars Nelson's brother. The poor boy had a fit, so his brother says, and fell out of the cross-trees as the thing passed us."

I could see the young chap give a shudder as he spoke, as if he'd not become hardened like the rest of us, and I asked:

"Where's Lars?"

"On duty, sir. He wouldn't come down, though some of the boys offered to take the rest of his watch aloft. The men say he looks dazed and stupid."

"Send him down to me at once," I said.

"Grief's all right enough, but I don't want a dazed man on the lookout with fifty-two souls to look after. Relieve him, and send him down to me."

Denyse touched his hat and sent a man aloft, while I got a lantern and looked at the body of the dead boy.

I knew him well enough; a fair, slender lad, hardly strong enough for a sailor's life, always sticking close to his big brother, who was a regular giant of a fellow.

He was dead enough now, but not so much disfigured as I should have thought. His face had a still, peaceful look, as if he had never known what hurt him. He had struck on the back of his head which was all crushed in, but for all that showed on his face might have been only asleep. I couldn't help feeling sad over the poor boy; but there was a sense of mystery and fear still hanging over me at the way in which his death had happened, that put sorrow nearly out of my head. I felt stupid as I looked at him, and couldn't quite understand the whole business. And while I was looking down at him, the men gathered round me, every one silent and white in the face, I heard Denyse say:

"Here's Lars Nelson, captain."

And there stood the dead boy's brother beside me.

CHAPTER II.

THE DANE'S PROPHECY.

THERE stood Lars Nelson, a big Dane, weighing over two hundred pounds, with a yellow beard that covered more than half his hairy chest, and fierce-looking blue eyes, blood-shot in the corners. Talk about your black eyes

flashing fire: I've seen wickeder looking blue and gray eyes than any of them, and Lars was one of that kind when he got a few drinks in him.

He looked quiet enough now, and, just as the men had said, he was dazed-like and stupid.

When he saw the body, covered with the watch-coat, he gave a sort of shivering sigh, more like a groan, and began to shake like a leaf, his face as white as chalk.

"Lars," I said to him gently, "how did it happen, my poor fellow? I don't want to hurt your feelings, but, if you can tell me, do."

Lars Nelson said nothing, but went on staring at the body, shaking and muttering to himself in Danish, as if he hadn't heard me, so I shook him by the shoulder, saying:

"Come, Nelson, rouse up. How did the boy fall?"

The shake seemed to rouse him, for he looked at me as if he had just waked up, saying:

"Captain, what is it?"

"How did the boy fall?" I asked.

"Fall! fall!"

He seemed to feel dazed again; for he passed his hand over his forehead, and then took off his cap and began to clutch his thick yellow curls of hair, repeating:

"Fall! fall! How did Ole fall? Eh, my God! how can I tell? It is the Evil One, has come again to punish me for my sins. Oh, captain, he was all I had to love, that Ole. I premised my mother to take care of him, and bring him back. It was his first voyage—no, his second, for I had to go home to Kiøbenhavn for him—"

And he seemed to be wandering off again, when I brought him up by saying sharply:

"Never mind all that, Nelson. Tell me how he fell. Was he subject to fits?"

The big Dane glared at me as if he meant to strike me.

"Fits! fits!" he cried. "Who said my Ole had fits? We are men, we Danes! We don't have fits. No, no, Ole died like a man, not a sick girl in a fit. Captain, the Evil One has set his eye on this ship. We'll never see land again. Never!"

"Shut up!" I cried, angrily, for I knew the men were all chock-full of superstition, listening to his wild talk; and didn't want it to go any further. "If you can't tell me how that boy came to fall from the mast-head, keep your jaw tackle belayed. Tell me how he fell, and nothing more."

My rebuke seemed to sober him, just as if he had been drunk, and he stood up, respectfully enough, as he answered me:

"He fell, through missing his footing, sir, when the Evil One looked at him."

"What?" cried I. "What do you mean by that?"

He was quite reasonable now. I could see it in his face as he answered me, quietly enough:

"I mean that, when the Evil One's ship passed by us, I was at the mast-head with my brother, and we saw a man with horns on his head and flaming eyes at the mast-head of the fiery ship. And he looked at us as he passed, and I heard my brother give a groan; saw him start back, letting go his hold, and then *I was all alone in the top with the Evil One glaring at me.*"

Do what I would, I could not help the cold chills running down my back when I heard the man talk in this way; but I shook off the feeling, for I knew it wouldn't do to let the men see I shared their notions, so I said:

"Well, Lars, my poor fellow, I'll see that the boy is decently buried and the very first port we come to I'll send word to your people, if you cannot write yourself."

He shook his head in a solemn sort of way and answered me:

"Thank you, captain, but we shall never see a port in this ship, and poor Ole will go down with the rest of us."

"Oh, nonsense, Lars," I said. "Don't be superstitious. If you can't talk sense, keep still."

He shook his head again.

"You don't believe me, captain. It matters not. You will see. We Danes can see more than other men, and I've heard my father say that the ship which meets the Ghost Sea King will never reach harbor again."

"Very well, then," I said, angrily. "Keep that to yourself, and don't go to scaring the men. I suppose you want to sit down and let the ship founder if a storm comes on, do you?"

The man drew himself up and his blood-shot eyes flashed as he shook his great arms in the air and cried out:

"Sit down! No, captain, you don't know a true Dane. He'll fight death and the devil together, if they choose to come. Did you ever hear of Ragnar Oleson?"

"Can't say I did," I said, to humor the man and get him off his morbid ways.

"Ragnar Oleson was my own ancestor, captain, and pirate in the days when pirates were kings. One day Yarl Erik, the Fork-beard, took him and his men prisoners, when they were all dead drunk, and ordered them to be chained to a log till they got sober, and then to have their heads cut off."

"Serve them right," said I, "for being pi-

rates, robbing honest men because they're too lazy to work for a living."

Nelson laughed in a wild sort of way and went on:

"Ay, ay. So Erik Fork-beard said, and ordered his headsman to strike, beginning at the last man on the log. And they all taunted him and laughed as they were being killed, till there were only nine left. And then Ragnar Oleson roared out to Erik:

"Your headsman's a coward. He daren't strike at me while I look in his eyes." Then Erik was angry and called the headsman to the front and told him to strike off Ragnar Oleson's head from before, taking him across the throat. And he tried to do so, but up rose Ragnar Oleson, with his glaring eyes, and stared at him, so the headsman faltered and did not dare to strike. And Erik the Fork-beard was so angry that he seized the sword himself and strode at Ragnar to kill him. And Ragnar stared at him—like this, captain."

As he spoke the big Dane folded his arms and stared at me out of those terrible bloodshot eyes of his, and looked so like a devil that, as I'm a living man, I began to realize that his story might be true, for I felt half scared myself to face him as he went on:

"And Ragnar waited till the Fork-beard was within good striking distance, when he suddenly pulled the Yarl to him by the beard, gave him the *skål*—the butt with his head, captain—and killed Yarl Erik dead. And then he cut his ropes with the Yarl's sword and got out, and he and his men raged so like devils that they drove Yarl Erik's men as if they had been sheep. Now, captain, they called me at home the image of Ragnar Oleson. Am I li'ly to quail in a storm? Let death and the devil come. I defy them to make me wink when they strike at my face."

And I must say the fellow looked as if he really did not fear death or the devil, now that I had roused up his pride.

So I said, briskly:

"That's the way to talk, Nelson! Never say die. Keep up the men's spirits, and don't give way to any nonsense about devils. We don't have any devils nowadays. They all died a hundred years ago."

Then I went away aft, for I didn't want to have him answer back, and I saw he was just in the mood when a very little would have set him going like a maniac, like all the rest of those Danes.

It's a queer thing I've noticed in men from opposite sides of the earth—the Danes and Malays. One set fair and blue-eyed, like angels, the other red and yellow and black, like devils; but let either of them get properly going and they'll fight a buzz-saw. The Malays will run a muck with a big knife, stabbing at every one; and I've seen Danes, Norwegians and Swedes do just the same, without so much as a stick to fight with, and knock men right and left like ninepins, some dead and some all stupid, with a butt of their hard heads or a kick.

But that's neither here nor there. I went back to the quarter-deck, thinking over what had happened, and more puzzled than I liked to own to myself, when I saw Falker coming out of the cabin, looking grave and anxious.

"What is it, Falker?" I said, for I knew that when his face looked grave there was something to be grave about.

He came up close to me and said, in a very low voice:

"The glass has dropped two inches since the Flying Dutchman passed us."

I knew what he meant well enough. When the glass drops an inch in a short time in low latitudes, it's a sure sign of a terrible storm coming, and we were not quite out of the range of the Mauritius hurricanes yet, while we were coming into the track of the typhoons.

I looked up at the sky, and then I saw that the face of the heavens had changed again. At moonset everything had been clear, the stars blazing like balls of fire, and afterward they had seemed to die out without any clouds, so that they looked like dull yellow sparks. Now they were blazing again, brighter than ever, all but one place, dead to leeward of the ship.

There, a small cloud as black as ink had risen up out of the sea, and I heard a low, faint mutter, hardly plain enough to be told from the groaning of the spars, but keeping itself up all the time. And every now and then I could see the edge of the little black cloud bordered with a white light, so that I knew well enough what was coming.

It was a typhoon, and the hot, sultry feel of the wind told me that it would be a bad one, for they're always worst when the weather is hottest.

"Get the ship stripped," I said to Falker. "Send down all you can send, and furl the rest. She'll stand a jib and one storm staysail, and that's all she'll stand to-night. Call all hands, sir."

CHAPTER III.

THE TYPHOON WAVE.

YOU may be sure Falker didn't wait long before he had all the men at work, stripping the old Spindrift. They worked like bees at a new

comb, and we had the stu'nails down in no time, sent down skysails and royals as fast as we could lower away, and kept at it like crazy men.

We were too busy even to look at the cloud to leeward; but every now and then, while the men were obeying an order, I stole a glance at it, and saw that it was rising like a black wall, shutting out the stars, while the flashes of lightning that went flickering over the face of it showed all sorts of black caves and mountains that no one could see till the lightning told them where to look.

When I first spied the cloud it rose no higher than the ship's rail; but by the time we had got the vessel stripped to a couple of staysails, the lightning was enough to blind one, and the thunder kept rolling and crashing in the cloud, without stopping so much as half a second to give a man a chance to be heard.

The last part of our work had to be done by signs, but there was plenty of light to see them by, for such a flashing and glimmering I never saw before, or hope to see again.

And as the storm advanced, so the wind fell; till it grew a dead calm, hotter than before, with the sea rising all round us in great oily swells, the ship rolling and pitching, with no sail to steady her, till I feared she would roll the masts out; and we had to hold on by the belaying-pins and anything we could get, to keep from being knocked about like ninepins.

The calm and the big sea were worse to my mind than the fury of a typhoon; or it seemed so to me then; for it's a terrible thing to have to wait for a calamity you can do nothing to stop.

I stood by the taffrail, holding on to a belaying-pin, and looking at the black clouds, with the ship swaying to and fro till her yard-arms dipped in the great black billows; while, under the cloud, I could see a line gleaming with the same pale, corpse-like fire, I'd seen on the rigging of the Flying Dutchman, not long before.

And I saw something else too, under the cloud, enough to stagger the stoutest heart that ever faced a storm.

In front of the storm came the wave, and Lord help the ship if that caught her before she gathered way on her.* On it came, first about two miles off, but moving like a race-horse; and, the nearer it came, the taller it looked, till it seemed to tower as high as our cross-trees.

And just then came a puff of wind from the cloud itself, cold as if it came off an iceberg.

We heard the cold wind howl through the rigging, saw the two staysails swell out with a bang, and the ship began to move before the wall struck us.

Not a moment too soon, for she had only gathered way fairly when the great wave took the wind out of our sails, and we felt the Spindrift beginning to rise. If we had been lying still or rolling that wave would have swept over us.

As it was, we had just enough way on us to let the end of it slip under, and then away we went up in the air, till it seemed we were on the side of a great mountain of water, that carried us along in a dead calm, going at thirty miles an hour, with a great curving arch that always seemed ready to fall on us, but never did, as we drove on.

On we drove in this way for a good half-hour, I should think, when I heard a voice in my ear, saying:

"Captain, can't I do anything to help tonight?"

I looked around, and there was Mungo Johnston, a long, lanky young fellow, with red hair and a face full of freckles, close to me, when I thought him below. I shook my head.

"All you can do is to keep still. You'd better go below, sir."

"I can't," he said, earnestly. "I'm not so much of a landsman as you think. It's not in a time like this a man can play passenger, when men's hands are needed. I'll work anywhere you like."

"No one can work now," I said. "We can only hold on and trust to Providence, my lad."

I could see his homely face in the glare of the lightning, and he looked as calm as any old sailor used to face danger.

"'Twas a fearsome sight," he said, in his Scotch way, "to see the strange ship; but this is worse; isn't it, captain?"

"Shut up about your ships," I said, crossly, for I couldn't help thinking about it myself, and felt ashamed of it. "What has that to do with the typhoon?"

"Only that we might have escaped the storm if we had taken the course she did," he answered, quietly.

* The hurricane wave is a well known danger attending all so-called cyclonic storms. It is supposed to be caused by differences in the pressure of the atmosphere. In front of the vortex of a typhoon or hurricane the pressure in the barometer is frequently nearly two inches below that in rear of the same vortex where the wind has full power. The result is a wave, seventy to a hundred feet in height, which sweeps on like a wall. In the great hurricane of 1782, this wave swept over a large part of the island of Barbadoes, and destroyed immense numbers of horses, cattle and people.—Ed.

"Sailed into the thick of it, you mean," I couldn't help saying. "That ship was never built by mortal hands, Mr. Johnston, and we'd best not talk of her."

I saw him give me a queer look out of his little greenish eyes, and heard him mutter to himself in some foreign lingo; so I said sharply:

"Talk English to me, Mr. Johnston, if you want to talk. What were you saying?"

This time he smiled as he answered:

"I beg your pardon; 'twas only a line of Persius—*O curas hominum! Quantum est in rebus inane!*—which is much the same as 'Oh vanity of vanities! what fools there are in the world!' No allusion to present company, captain; but you don't mean to say that you believe all that stuff the sailors talk about Phantom Ships?"

I'll own that I like to be captain of my own ship, and don't like to have a passenger make fun of me even in the middle of a typhoon; but I kept my temper, and answered him:

"I dare say you know a good deal, my lad; but when you've been to sea forty years, you'll know there are many things no one can find out, and this is one of them."

"I disagree with you," he said, quick as wink. "There's nothing in the world that can't be found out, if a man tries hard enough."

"Very well, then," I said, "since you know so much, find out when this wave will break over us."

He looked up at the wave as coolly as if he'd been on land, and then ahead, where the stars still gleamed out of the sky, beyond the black border of cloud, that had swept down by this time, nearly to the horizon.

"Captain," he said quietly, "we've been favored by Providence, as you call it, so far. We are being driven along before the vortex of a typhoon, and as long as we stay here we're safe. But we shall not stay here long."

"Why not?" I asked—not that I thought he knew anything of it.

"Because the storm-cloud is still advancing a little faster than we are. Air moves faster than water. When the last star is blotted out, this wave will break over us."

I couldn't help feeling uneasy at his words, as I looked out at the stars beyond the clouds. He was right.

We were driving along before the storm; but the storm was getting ahead of us. Even as we looked, I saw the last stars vanishing.

CHAPTER IV.

THE WAVE BREAKS.

AND just as the further horizon still showed itself in a faint line with a single star blazing in the midst of it, I heard a loud crash of thunder over our heads, and down came a shower of spray from the crest of the wave, followed by a gust of wind that struck the ship like the blow of a hammer.

I heard the sound of cracking sticks that told me something was going, and Johnston yelled out, as if he was giving orders:

"Here she comes, captain! Hold on all!"

I didn't heed that he was almost taking the ship away from me, as I looked up; for the sight I saw made me forget everything but death.

The crest of the wave was broken by a ragged gap, bordered with fiery greenish spray, and all beyond looked like a black gulf, while tons and tons of water were coming down on the Spindrift, as if we were under Niagara Falls.

I held on to the belaying-pin and flattened myself out on the deck; and then down it came. What followed I can't tell for the life of me. It seemed as if the ship was swallowed up in a single second and we were carried along like a chip in a mill-race, choking for breath and holding on, the belt we knew how, with the water tearing at us like a giant, trying to break our grip and carry us off.

How long it lasted I don't know. It couldn't have been long of course, for I was able to hold my breath; and I know that no man can do that, over a minute, except he's had long practice for a living, keeping under water.

I felt my head whirling round, my chest heaving, like I was struggling, and I didn't dare to take in my breath, when I knew the water would kill me dead. And then, all of a sudden, I felt the air again, and had time to take another gulp of it, before the sea swallowed us all up, the second time.

But the second wave didn't last as long as the first, and I opened my eyes at the second breath I got, to find it pitch dark, except for the glimmer of the lightning.

And when I looked round by the light of the next flash, I saw nothing but black waves that towered up like hills, topped with spray; a black sky behind them, and the ship laboring in the trough of the sea, a perfect wreck of masts and rigging, helpless as a log.

When I saw that, I knew it was no use to struggle any more. No human power could get us out of the trough of the sea, without a stitch of sail to give us way on the ship.

There we had to lie, buffeted about, the moun-

tains of water breaking over us every moment, only sheltered from the terrible wind by the more terrible waves.

I knew we were in the very thick of the typhoon, by the way the wind blew the tops of the waves off, in all sorts of directions, as it chopped about.

The lightning no longer flashed as much as it had, and after each flash the night was so black that I couldn't see my hand in front of my face.

As for the ship's company, there was no means of telling what had become of them, whether they were all killed or not.

I heard the wrecks of masts and spars thundering about the deck, and didn't dare to rise and try to cut them away. It was more than any man's life was worth to let go for a single instant, just then.

Between the waves and the flashes, I managed to make out that old Ike Hackett was near me, still holding on to what was left of the wheel, while Mungo Johnston had hold of a belaying-pin, on the starboard quarter.

Forrard of the stump of the mizzen-mast, I couldn't see for the confusion of wreck.

And there we lay and held on.

I guess we must have lain in the trough of that sea for a long time, when I heard Johnston screech out:

"Courage, captain! Here comes the day at last!"

And then I began to see things round me in the gray light, and found that the typhoon had spent its worst fury, and had turned into a furious gale, with a gray sky, over which the dark scud clouds drove like birds in full flight, while the sea seemed to be rising higher and higher every moment.

We could do nothing but wait for the light, and it came on, as it always does on sea or land; for the wildest storm can't stop the sun from coming.

And when it came, such a sight as the poor old Spindrift showed I never hope to see again. It makes me cry to think of it now. Not a mast left. The bowsprit remained, or part of it, with the jib-boom broken short off and hanging by the bobstays, the sea tossing it to and fro, and dashing it up against the cut-water and forward bulwarks, till the whole front of the ship lay open to the sea, with the rail smashed into kindling-wood.

It seemed a miracle to me we had not all foundered, or that the spars hadn't knocked a hole in the ship's side, long before.

I saw that the time had come at last to do something, for there was a possibility of moving about; so I turned to Mungo Johnston and yelled:

"You said you'd work. Help me to cut away that wreck!"

He nodded and scrambled up, while we three—Hackett, Mungo and me—made a dash for the axes at the foot of the mizzen-mast.

Thank Providence, they were all there yet, and we got at them, and made our way to the mizzen-rigging, in the very place where Mamie Bruce's hammock had been slung the night before.

I could see the remains of the flimsy thing entangled up in the cords of the dead eyes, and it made me sigh to think of what was to become of that poor child in the trials I saw before us.

But we'd no time to think of anything but our work, as we hacked away at the lanyards of the mizzen-rigging, and got it all clear at last.

It didn't take us as long as we had feared it would, when once we got into a place where we could work, between seas.

The tugging of the waves at the timbers helped us by stretching the lanyards taut, and once the first parted, the rest went very quickly.

But all this time I was looking for the men, and couldn't find hide nor hair of one of them, as we worked on, till we had got to the remains of the main rigging, when I saw something crouched under the cover of the main hatch, and made it out at last to be two men lashed fast to ring-bolts, and seemingly stone dead, so still did they lie.

Waiting till we had cut the main rigging, the sea helped us in the rest of our task and sent the spars thundering overboard with a crash; while the ship, relieved of the weight, lifted up her quarter, leaving her bows nearly under, and began to drift to leeward of the mass of wreck, which was still held to us by the rigging on the port side of the ship.

As it did so, I saw the two men move, and one of them sat up, when I knew Lars Nelson, the big Dane, with a friend of his, as big as himself, called Erik Andersen. And what amazed me most, was to see Lars hold up a bottle and yell out something in Danish to his friend, which showed me that he was drunk, though how he got his liquor I didn't know.

Erik Andersen growled out a curse in Danish, and struggled up by his friend, snatching at the bottle, and the next thing I knew, the two good-for-nothing brutes were bucking each other's heads, wrestling and punching like two madmen, while the broken bottle spilled all the liquor (which I was glad to see) and robbed them both.

How long they would have fought, it's hard to say, but a great sea came aboard in the thick

of it and went both, sprawling and choking, into the lee scuppers, where I yelled out to them:

"Stop fighting and come and fight the seas, you fools!"

My voice seemed to sober them instantly, for they both scrambled up and came toward me, when Nelson said respectfully:

"We are glad you are alive, captain. I thought we were the only ones left alive in the ship. Give us the axes. We are fresh."

The man seemed sober enough, though his face was all bloody where Andersen had bucked him; but for that matter both had the same bloody noses, and neither seemed to mind it.

We weren't sorry to give them the axes, and they went at their work with such zeal, that in five minutes more, the ship was riding with her head to the mass of wreck, as if to an anchor, while the seas no longer broke over us.

"Thank Heaven!" I said fervently; "she floats yet, and we may be able to make Batavia under jury-masts."

Lars Nelson heard me and shook his head, saying:

"No, no, captain. We may get to land, some of us, but the ship's going down with Ole, as I said she would."

I turned on him angrily, saying:

"Where did you get your rum, you scoundrel? You're drunk."

He only laughed and answered:

"What's the use of dying like a sick calf, when one can meet death and the devil with a laugh for the sake of a pint of rum? I was drunk. I know it. I heard the crash, found everybody dead or gone overboard but Erik and me, and I thought we might as well go to the next world as happy as we hope to be when we get there. You know, captain, we Norsemen have a heaven where we all get drunk every day."

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself," I said, hoping to make him so; "to be getting drunk on the very day your poor little brother died."

He frowned at me and shook the ax he still held, saying:

"Don't be too masterful, captain. The ship's going down, and we two Danes won't be interfered with, now. We'll help you, if you speak us fair; but we don't want any more tying up in the rigging."

"Do you mean that you will dare to mutiny?" said I.

Both Danes laughed.

"Dare!" cried Erik Andersen. "Ha! capitaine, you ne say dat too often to a Dane. Come, Lars."

And both men threw down their axes, and went to the fore-hatch, which they opened, and were going down, when I saw a head come up out of the hatchway, and Mr. Denyse, our third mate, staggered on deck, pale as a corpse, and fell over on the hatch cover, gasping for breath.

The sight of him seemed to alter the intentions of the two ruffians; for they stopped and began to jabber Danish to each other, looking down at the mate.

I went up and shook Denyse, calling out to him:

"Mr. Denyse, what's the matter? Where have you been, sir?"

He looked up at me and tried to rise, but seemed too weak to do it, till he had gasped several times, when he said faintly:

"I beg pardon, sir—better in a minute.—I was below—hunting for—a light—when they battened down hatches—I couldn't make them hear me and I was near dead for foul air and—the corpse is there, sir."

He seemed to be as nearly done up as a man could be till the air revived him, and certainly the stench that came out of that fore-castle was enough to knock a man down as soon as he put his head over it.

Even the two Danes wilted under it and turned away.

"What do you mean by getting a light?" I asked Denyse as soon as he was able to sit up.

"What did you want in the fore-castle? Your place was on deck with the rest."

"I know it, sir," he said quietly. "I only went down with the corpse, to lay it out decently, and I went to get some candles to burn at his head. You know I'm a Catholic, sir. I thought I'd have time, but the storm was too quick for me."

"Were you alone, sir?" I asked.

"Yes, sir, alone with the corpse and it was awful, after a little."

Here Mungo Johnston touched my shoulder and pointed to the cabin, saying:

"If it was bad down there, it will be worse there. There are six people locked up in the cabin. Let us release them before it is too late, captain."

The young fellow had more sense than I had; for I had forgotten all about the poor passengers, and I own I felt scared as we went back to open the cabin doors.

CHAPTER V.

GONE DOWN AT SEA.

THE Spindrift had a flush deck, and her cabin hatch had been battened down like all the rest, when the typhoon came on. I'd been on emi-

grant ships before, when ship fever had started through battening down, but then we had had a great crowd of people, and I knew that the cabin of the Spindrift was a large one, so I had not so much fear when first I ordered it shut up.

Well, we unfastened the cabin-door and looked in. Everything was quiet. Not a soul was in the saloon, and the state-room doors were all closed.

It was dreadful hot down there; for we'd shut up the hatch before the typhoon came on, when the thermometer had stood at 98, and the heat had all been kept in during the storm.

I went down first, as soon as I thought the air had had time to get in, and the first thing I heard sent my heart into my mouth, as the saying is. *Underneath the cabin floor I heard the wash of the water*, going to and fro as the ship rolled, and I knew that she must be leaking badly.

I turned to Denyse and said:

"Go and sound the well, sir. I'll rouse up the passengers."

He touched his cap and went off, while I began to thunder on the state-room doors.

The only door that wasn't bolted was Sam Peters's, and I suppose he'd left it unfastened for his room-mate, Johnston.

We found the young doctor on his back, snoring hard, all dressed in his clothes, as if he'd lain down for a moment, and it was almost impossible to get him awake, though we shook and pulled him hard.

At last Mungo Johnston said:

"There's something wrong here. It's the foul air, I think. Drag him out on deck; I begin to feel dizzy myself."

So did I, for that matter, and we had hard work to drag Sam out and get him on deck, where he very soon revived and began to shiver in the cold wind, and look at us, stupid-like, as if he didn't know how he came there. Well, to cut the matter short, we had to call in the Danes and make several trips to the cabin, break in the state-room doors and drag out the people, finding them all asleep, or, more like, insensible, till we had them all on deck, gasping like fishes as the cold air struck them and they revived.

And as soon as they were in a fair way of recovery Denyse came up and whispered:

"We've no time to lose, sir. The water's rising every minute, and the ship's beginning to settle."

I tell you, when I look back now, sitting in my arm-chair, to that day, I sometimes seem to think it was only a miracle that saved us from going down long before; for when I went to the cabin hatch and looked down I saw the water already upon the floor of the cabin, and I knew we hadn't half an hour to float.

And there was the poor Spindrift in the middle of the Indian Ocean—I didn't know where—with only seven able-bodied men aboard her (young Hyatt could hardly be counted a full man), and four women to take care of, with three old men—Bruce, old Hyatt and Peters—who promised to be as helpless as the women in what was coming on us now.

I took just one look around.

Every boat had been smashed in the typhoon except one—an iron life-boat, meant to hold four oars.

That had been lashed down to ring-bolts on deck, bottom up, and I thought it would float, though it had been dented and battered considerably by the spars knocking about.

Overboard, by the bows, was the mass of masts and yards, still held together by the rigging, and I knew that would float anyway.

Old Bruce looked like a corpse, Peters wasn't much better, and it was only the young people who seemed to have strength enough left to throw off the effects of the foul air below.

Mamie Bruce and Mrs. Peters were both sitting up, looking forlorn and frightened, while Inez Diaz, like the good, patient girl she was, had forgotten her own trouble in looking after her mistress.

Old Hyatt was the toughest of the old men, and he and his wife seemed to be near over their first weakness; while their boy, Cyril Adolphus, was as pale as a ghost, puking his heart out in the lee scuppers, with his mother crying over him and wringing her hands thinking he was going to die.

I saw there was no time to be lost if I hoped to save any lives, and I wanted to know whether I could depend on the Danes.

I felt afraid to trust them till I knew where they had got their rum; and I knew what sailors were when their ship goes down, and they think they're not bound to obey any one.

So I turned to the whole lot, all together, and said:

"Shipmates all, we've got to get out of this ship and get this life-boat out. I want to know if there's any man here who's afraid to follow me and help fight for our lives?"

I put it that way on purpose to catch the Danes, and Erik Andersen took it up at once, answering:

"Capitaine, I fight for you till death, you speak me fair."

"And you, Nelson?" I asked. "Will you obey orders and take care of these poor women here?"

He straightened up in a minute.

"A Dane never deserts a woman, captain," he said, with a sort of doubtful look. "Yes, I'll obey orders; but it's no use. I tell you, we'll never reach port."

"Will you obey orders, and leave the rest to me?" said I.

"Yes, captain, on the faith of a Dane, I will," he answered, with a shrug. "I told you I'd fight death and the devil, and I will."

"Very well," said I, "see you don't break your word, and get at the rum again."

He laughed.

"No chance, captain. We got that in the wreck of the cook's galley, and there's no more."

"Very good," said I; and then I turned to Denyse and Hackett.

"I don't ask you to follow me, because you're both good men. Now, you passengers, which of you will help save us all?"

"I will," said Sam Peters as he got up, lively enough now.

"But I hope it's not as bad as all that, captain. Is the ship going down?"

"Of course she is," I said, for I knew it was no use to hide it, and I wanted to rouse them all up. "She won't float half an hour longer, and we've got to get out fifteen people, and grub for all, in a boat only meant for eight. We've got to make a raft, and do it lively; or we'll be sucked down in the eddy. All hands must get to work, women and all. No time for high strikes and nonsense. You girls get up and work. Mr. Bruce, if you don't want to get drowned stand up. Dr. Peters, we'll have to leave you if you can't make an effort. You, young Hyatt, if you want to be left to drown, keep on being sick. Now quick. First let's get this boat overboard, and some of those spars into a raft. The old folks get the grub out of the cabin. Cut loose the water casks, the last thing. They'll float up."

And to work we all went with a will, the two Danes going at it like giants, now they were fairly roused.

We got the boat turned over and ready to launch by the bows, while Hackett and the Danes, with Denyse to lead them, scrambled on to the wreck of the spars, and began to make a sort of raft, as only old sailors can.

They were four strong men, but all their strength wouldn't have been much use if they hadn't known how to handle the timbers and themselves in such a sea as was still running. They made the waves help them in getting the spars side by side, and using up the tangle of running rigging to keep them in place. As for me, I had my hands full in getting things into the boat, for I'd made up my mind that she wouldn't hold us all, but that she could carry our grub and water, with a few instruments to find out where we were as soon as the sun shone again.

But, work as we might, and as fast as we could, the water kept rising in the cabin, and before I could get more than a couple of boxes of biscuit and a case of canned meats out of the steward's pantry into the boat, the ship began to settle so low that the seas came aboard again.

Mamie Bruce was nearly sent overboard by one sea, and it was only Mungo Johnston caught her in time and held on to her with one arm, while he grabbed the binnacle with the other hand.

I shouted to them to "launch the boat and get to the raft quick," and the consequence was a rush, in which young Hyatt fought his way to the front, throwing Inez Diaz down in his desperation, and between them they nearly upset the boat, broadside to the sea.

Mungo Johnston kept his head the best, and called to Sam Peters, who helped him, and the two got the boat steadied, kicked Cyril Adolphus out of the way, and had the women aboard, just as the waves came washing in again.

I saw the time had come, as the life boat was swept off, and the two men got the oars out, with Cyril Adolphus and Old Peters left behind on the ship with me, and the raft floating off to leeward, for Andersen had cut the ropes that bound her to the ship as soon as he saw the Spindrift beginning to settle.

For a moment I thought it was all day with me, but the ship had only settled to an even keel, and there was air enough in her yet to float some minutes, for we had of course battened down all but the cabin hatch as soon as we found her sinking.

The difference between fore-castle and cabin now began to tell, and the Spindrift settled by the stern, with her bows cocked up in the air, so that poor old Peters and young Hyatt came sliding down the deck to me at the cabin hatch.

I looked out. We were alone. The sea was running as high as ever, and I couldn't see raft or boat any more.

Cyril Adolphus was crying like a baby, and old Dr. Peters looked out at the raging sea as if he was stupid.

I turned to them both and cried:

"Never say die, doctor. The life-buoys are here yet. Cut them loose and jump for it."

They understood me and ran to the life-

buoys that still hung round the stump of the mizzen-mast.

Then we all jumped together, and tried to get away from the ship before she sucked us under.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RAFT.

I don't remember ever swimming as hard as I did that day. When a fellow knows it's all up with him if he can't get out of a ship's eddy in time, he's apt to do his utmost and I reckon we all three put in our best licks.

Anyway, we were not sucked in by the ship, and didn't even see her sink, as we floated on the life-buoys, up and down, on the towering waves.

You may not believe it, but at first, after we got used to the buoys, the change from the ship was a pleasant one. A man on a buoy floats like a cork, and never stays in the trough of the sea long.

It was up, up, up, with us one minute and down again the next, quick enough to take your breath away, so that we felt like birds flying in the air.

But after near half an hour's floating about like corks, I began to feel the chill of the water and the awful loneliness.

Boat and raft were nowhere to be seen, though I looked round from the top of every wave we mounted.

All I could see was the tops of other waves, black as ink, crested with white, in one tossing confusion everywhere.

And there we floated away to leeward, till it suddenly occurred to me that the raft and boat couldn't be far off.

I knew they could only do as we did, drift to leeward from the place where the ship went down, and that our distance apart could only be the difference between our drifts. I told this to the doctor, and it cheered him up some, and then I told them that, if we all gave a good shout together, it was more than likely the people on the raft would hear us.

Well, to make a long story short, we all joined in a loud hail, and then listened our best.

Almost immediately after we heard an answering hail, and the doctor's face lighted up, while young Hyatt looked as if he was ready to go wild with joy.

The hail came from windward, and in another minute we heard it repeated, and saw the life-boat on the crest of a wave behind us, coming down.

There were only four men in her—the two Danes, Hackett and Mungo Johnston—and they had the life-lines towing as they swept us by.

You may be sure we grabbed them quick enough, when the two Danes pulled us aboard, and we felt as thankful as if we had touched land at last. At first, that is, for, after we'd been on board a little, we seemed as badly off as ever, except that we were seven instead of three.

We were as much alone as ever, and I wondered where the raft was, till Mungo Johnston called out:

"Get her head round, boys. We've got to pull back to the ladies."

"Where are they?" I asked.

"Somewhere to windward," he answered.

"We put them on the raft, and my kinsman insisted that we put off and hunt for you."

The young fellow looked as much at home in the boat as if he had been at sea all his life, and I began to forget his homely freckled face and greenish eyes when I saw how like a real man he behaved.

I got on the seat with him and helped him pull stroke oar, and we began to labor up to windward to find the raft.

We knew it would drift very slowly, and I began to fear that Denyse, left alone with only Sam Peters and the old men to help him, would have a hard time, when Johnston remarked, as he tugged at the oar:

"Your third mate's a good man, captain. He's hard at work getting the raft ship-shape to keep the waves from sweeping it. Sam Peters works like a horse, and even the women are helping—I mean the ladies."

"We're all men and women now," I told him. "We'll drop the titles till we get ashore, if we ever do."

I heard a sort of growl behind me, and there was Lars Nelson, shaking his head again in the old gloomy way; but, as he said nothing, I didn't.

We pulled steadily on till Johnston observed: "We ought to be near them now, I think. Let's hail."

We all sung out as loud as we could, and presently came back the answer, close to windward, showing we hadn't reached them yet.

The sound put courage into us all, and we pulled on till we sighted the raft, now a big mass of timbers, all ranged neatly side by side, and so fenced in with the top hamper of the ship that the water didn't sweep over it any higher than a man's ankles. In the middle I saw that Denyse had rigged up a sort of platform, on which the women were high and dry.

I tell you, that raft looked like heaven to us in the boat, it was so strong and solid. We

knew it couldn't sink, and the water took so little hold of it, on account of its giving to the waves, that the platform in the middle didn't heave about any more than a big ship.

We hauled up to the leeward and made the boat fast, when we scrambled on board and set to work like men to help make it still stronger.

We were so busy that we didn't notice time flying till a glow of yellow light came streaking over the waves, and we looked around to see the sun, about an hour from his setting, breaking through the ragged, greasy-looking clouds, to find the gale breaking and the sea going down fast.

We all stopped and gave the sun three cheers before he went out again, even the girls joining in with a will.

Then we looked round at each other, and could hardly help laughing. Such a woeful, bedraggled lot as we were, especially the women, with their wet clothes clinging to them, their long hair hanging round their faces or tossing in the wind, like ropes' ends.

Little Mame Bruce, that had been the belle of the ship, looked like a drowned rat, and Mrs. Peters hadn't a spark of beauty left in her misery. The best of the lot was old Mrs. Hyatt, who had on thick clothes, and didn't seem chilled to death like the others, while Inez, the Spanish girl, had managed to twist her black hair into a tight knot, to be out of the way while she waited on Mamie, and looked the only real handsome woman in that whole crowd, for she had a strong, well-shaped figure, like a country girl, and behaved as if used to taking care of herself.

I saw that they needed cheering up a little, so I sang out:

"Mr. Denyse, call all hands to grub, and if there's any rum on board, we'll splice the main brace."

That made them laugh, and we began to hunt for what food we had with us, when I was fairly scared to discover what I found out.

We had three boxes of biscuit, and a case of canned corned beef, salmon, and such-like; but there wasn't one drop of fresh water on that raft.

I remembered having ordered the water-casks cut loose; but in the hurry, when the ship went down, what was everybody's business was nobody's; and there we were, fifteen souls on the raft, with salt food and dry biscuits to eat, and nothing but salt water round us.

You may be sure our faces fell when we found this out, for we were all thirsty enough already with our work; but Mungo Johnston comforted us by telling how he was sure there was a breaker of water in the life-boat, and there we found it, lashed under the thwarts, as it had been all the voyage, a little eight-gallon affair, the size of a common lager beer keg.

Eight gallons of water between fifteen people, out in the Indian Ocean, with no prospect of seeing land!

"You may be sure I took charge of that keg myself, and got it on the platform, where I dealt out an allowance to each person, and we ate our supper, such as it was, in a very sober mood. The sun came out again just as it touched the horizon, and by that time the wind had gone down still more, while heavy black clouds had gathered over our heads, and the weather was growing warmer and sultry.

I saw several flashes of lightning, and said to myself aloud:

"Now, if we only had something to catch the water; it's going to rain hard, I think."

Clarence Denyse spoke up.

"There's the boat, sir; if we clean her out, and haul her up on the raft. She'll hold a good deal, I'm sure."

"I couldn't help respecting that fellow then, if his name was Clarence, so I told him to do what he pleased.

Then he called Mungo Johnston and the Danes, and they hauled up the life-boat; washed it out, turned it over to drip, and set it up by the platform, wedging it fast, before dark.

The waves no longer came on board, and the whole raft was above water by the time the night came on; and then it fell dead calm, as I had thought it would, and we had a regular torrent of warm rain.

I've often known this to happen after a typhoon, and the thunder and lightning are worse than in the storm itself, and all the more awful from the intense calmness and silence between peals.

The rain came down in real streams, and feeling like a warm shower-bath, and we heard it splashing into the boat and on the raft, while the waves round us seemed to be beaten flat by the rain, for we could see the ocean, smooth as a mill-pond, in the light of the flashes.

I was afraid the lightning might take a fancy to strike our boat, but somehow it didn't, and the storm passed away to one side and left us, under the most brilliant sky I ever saw before or since, with the stars blazing down, so we could fancy we felt their heat.

The warmth was very good to us after the miserable chill of the typhoon, and we wrung out our clothes as well as we could, and lay down on the raft to rest. We had no longer any fears about water. We could lean over the

edge of the life-boat and drink all we wanted; for it was full.

And as the boat was about twenty feet long, by five beam and depth, I calculated she must hold several hundred gallons, more than we could use before the sun spoiled it.

It didn't take long for us to go to sleep. We were all dog tired.

I don't know how long I slept; but I woke up to find the Southern Cross upright in the sky before my face, and knew from that, midnight had come. What woke me I didn't know at first, but when I did, I uttered a shout and sat up, broad awake.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FLYING DUTCHMAN'S RETURN.

You may wonder why I uttered a shout. To tell the truth, I was so startled and shocked, I couldn't have helped it for my life.

The sea all round was as black as ink; as smooth as a mirror, and full of stars, like the heavens; but for all there was not a breath of air stirring, there was that terrible, fiery ghost of a ship we had seen before the typhoon, sailing along, not a quarter of a mile off, in full view, her filmy sails gleaming as if woven of fire, the ghastly skeleton of her ribs and keel as distinct as ever; while she left a long, fiery wake behind her like a comet's tail.

My shout woke up every one on the raft, and they all started up and stared at the Flying Dutchman, as horrified as I was. Some groaned, some muttered to each other, and Mamie Bruce gave a sort of scream:

"Oh, heavens! there it is again!"

The only persons who said nothing were the two Danes.

I saw them get up and peer at the fiery ghost curiously, and then they both came and stood beside me, staring silently.

On went the fiery ghost ship, as plain as ever, and as silently as a spirit. She seemed to be going, if she were a real ship, at about seven knots an hour, and it was certain she parted the water, for I could see her wake behind her, like a line of green fire in the black sea.

I was staring at her, spellbound, when Mr. Denyse came up beside me, and said in a low tone:

"Hadn't we better hail her, sir?"

"Hail what? Hail her? My good man, are you crazy? Do you want to bring the devil here in person?"

"No, sir," he said, quietly. "I only thought, as he was so close, he might pick us up, out of common humanity."

"Common humanity!" says I. "Are you stark, staring mad, Denyse? That's not a real ship. If we do hail him, maybe he'll come down and carry us off, anyhow, to a place I don't want to visit."

"And what place is that, sir?" says Denyse, in a quiet way.

"Davy Jones's locker, sir," I said, quite angrily. "Don't talk any more nonsense, but think yourself lucky if he doesn't bring us another typhoon to kill what's left of us from the other."

"Ay, ay," says Lars Nelson, in a sort of groan. "Gold help the man that sees the Evil One thrice. He takes him with him the third time."

Denyse didn't answer him, but he stood watching the fiery ship with folded arms as it passed on and grew more and more distant, till at last he turned away and went back to the platform, where I heard the passengers discussing things in low voices, and I said to Nelson:

"Tell me what your people say of the Flying Dutchman. Who is he?"

Lars looked gloomily at me, and then said something in Danish to Erik, who didn't talk very good English. Erik nodded, and said something in reply, and then the other Dane told me:

"We don't call him the Dutchman. He is the Evil One himself, who entered into the spirit of a Dane Sea King, the greatest fighter we ever had in our nation. He could wield a sword in each hand, and when he leaped on board his enemy's ship the crew leaped into the sea to drown, for fear of his eyes and terrible voice."

"Oh, well, that's all a story," I said, for I couldn't believe that sort of stuff, you know.

Lars Nelson shook his head.

"It is no story, but the truth, captain, as we shall find out. My ancestor, Ragnar Oleson, met him once, the Pirate King, and defied him to his face. And the Pirate King told him he would give him just one year to live, when he would fetch him, no matter where he was, down to Nostrand, where the terrible goddess Hel rules over the caverns of snakes that spit poison on men's heads and drive them mad. And Ragnar Oleson defied him to do it and went home. But in one year from that very day the Evil One came for him in his ship, sailing in the air, and found Ragnar Oleson before a church door in Denmark. And Ragnar Oleson ran into the church, with the demon after him, and snatched the crucifix off the high altar to smite the Pirate King."

"Very well, what next?" I asked, for I

couldn't help feeling a sort of chill at his story, and the man seemed to believe it.

"And then," said Lars, "Ragnar Oleson fought the Devil till Death came to his help in the church, for the Devil fears the crucifix, but Death fears no one and nothing."

"And Death whipped?" said I. "Of course he did."

"Not so," answered Lars.

"Ragnar Oleson defied him and drove him from the church, and Death and the Devil sat down before the church-door; for they knew they could beat him if they got him outside once. But Ragnar Oleson was no fool, and he stayed there by the altar."

"And how did it all end?" said I.

Lars lowered his voice.

"Captain, don't laugh at this, for I know it's true. Ragnar Oleson had been a bad man all his life, but even he had come to a place where he saw he must give in to somebody."

"I should say he had. He was in a bad fix, according to your story."

"Yes. And while he stayed in the church all alone, he saw the old priest come in, a poor old man that he had often scoffed at in his pride and strength. And then he saw Death and the Devil hide from the old man, as if they feared him; and the old priest came into the church and asked him what he was doing there, and who had hurt him, for Ragnar was bleeding at every pore and growing weak. And Ragnar told him how Death and the Devil waited at the church-door, and how he was getting too weak to fight any more. And then the old priest told him that there was only one way for him to escape."

"And what was that?" said I.

"He had to repent of his sins and become as a little child, so that the good Christ might ask God to let him off the punishment he had deserved, captain. The priest told him that Death was God's servant, and the Devil God's enemy; but when a man chose to serve the Devil all his life, it was only fair to give him to the Devil at his death."

"I reckon the old man was just about right, Lars," said I. "But what did Ragnar do?"

Lars Nelson looked up at the Southern Cross, standing there in the sky, and his voice sounded hushed-like, as he answered:

"Ragnar Oleson had been a heathen all his life, but he let the priest baptize him; and as the holy water touched his forehead, the church shook as if in an earthquake, and when they looked out of the church-door the Devil was gone, and Death had changed into an angel of light, who told Ragnar that he would give him another year to prove if he meant what he said when he was baptized."

"And what became of him?" I asked him.

"Ragnar Oleson became a monk and a great preacher among the heathen pirates, captain, and he was preaching to them one year from that day, when Death took him away as he was blessing the people, and now he is Saint Ragnar in Heaven."

"Then you think that he was the only man that ever got the best of the Ghost Pirate?"

"I do, captain," he said seriously, and then he went away and I heard him and his mate growling to each other in Danish.

As for me, I didn't know what to make of it all. I never believed in ghosts, and I knew Lars's story must be all bosh about saints and crosses and such.

But I'd seen the Flying Dutchman twice and I couldn't rub that out of my memory, nohow.

I sat there thinking and thinking till who should come along but Mungo Johnston, Sam Peters and Denyse, and Denyse said:

"Captain, we three have been talking over that strange ship, and we've made up our minds that if she comes again we ought to signal her. We don't believe in ghosts, and we all think that there is some natural explanation of the mystery."

"Very well, gentlemen," says I; "if you're so smart, tell me how you explain it, now?"

They looked at each other, and Mungo Johnston answered:

"We are not prepared to explain yet, captain, from the absence of facts on which to reason, but we feel certain of this, that we have seen a real ship."

Here we heard Lars Nelson give a sneering sort of laugh, and he called out:

"You are very wise, you men of America, because they have no ghosts in your country; but we Danes have plenty in every house in our country. I tell you there's only one way to keep from being drowned, now."

"And what's that?" asked Denyse, as if he wanted to humor the man's fancies.

Lars Nelson pointed to the Southern Cross, and answered:

"He'll never harm us under that sign, and when that comes in broad daylight we may hope to see port, not before."

"What do you mean by the cross coming in broad daylight?" I asked him.

"I mean what I say," said he. "It must come to us, and we can't make it. It may come in the sea; it may come in the sky, but till it comes we must fight Death and the Devil, the best we can."

I saw Sam Peters turn away with a sneer as

if he pitied the sailor's superstition; but Mungo Johnston said:

"I think you're right, Lars, and I think we shall see it to-morrow."

The Dane started and seemed to be interested in what he had said, for he asked eagerly:

"Why do you think so?"

"Because I know it is coming," said Mungo quietly. "You wait a few days, and I'll show you a living cross coming from the skies towards us."

The two Danes actually got up and came to him to shake his hand while Erik said:

"You good, good man! You show me dat, Erik never leave you. Never drink rum again. Go and be priest like St. Ragnar."

Mungo seemed to feel quite sober over it, for he said:

"I hold you to your promise and you too Lars Nelson."

Lars nodded his head.

"All right. You show me the living cross, I drink no more. But the Devil will give us a hard fight of first."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE THIRD VISIT.

I DON'T know how it was, but that young fellow's words seemed to comfort us all, and from that time I felt no more fear of the Flying Dutchman, though, for that matter, the ghost ship had gone out of sight before this, seeming to fade away all of a sudden.

We went to sleep again and didn't wake up till morning, when the sun rose up in a sky that glowed like polished brass and we lay there, heaving on the ground-swell, with the air hot enough to bake us all.

I'd taken good care to move the ship's compass and my navigator's chest, with the chronometers, the tables of the almanac, and my sextant. Inside the chest was fixed a thermometer and a little aneroid barometer, and I soon found the mercury up above a hundred in the sun—we had no shade—till it touched a hundred and thirty-five, while the barometer showed a medium pressure. That means a hot spell in those latitudes, and long before noon we began to wilt and sweat, while our heads felt ready to burst with the fiery heat beating on us.

I found at noon, after taking the sun, that we were in longitude 84 degrees 36 minutes east from Greenwich and in 6 degrees 49 minutes south latitude, showing that the typhoon had driven, or the current carried us to the northeast from the place we first saw the Flying Dutchman, and that we were not very far from the Campton Rocks, a lot of low coral reefs, seldom visited by ship, and about as dangerous a place as one would wish to know of.

I didn't fear them much in the raft, for we had got to that point where we couldn't by any possibility sink, though a heavy storm might break up the raft. As for striking, we should have welcomed a bump, if it only told us the land was near.

We felt so wretched there, in that bake-oven, with the glare from sea and sky to burn us up, that I wonder we didn't all go mad.

The Danes got over the side of the raft and tried to keep cool by bathing, but that didn't help us much.

If we took off any clothes the sun scorched our backs, and if we bathed in our clothes it soon turned them into a hot bath and more misery.

Those that began dipping had to keep it up, and the salt water made them so thirsty that they had to go to the life-boat and drink the fresh water there though it was lukewarm before noon.

I shall never forget that first day.

We gave the women the only shelter we had, under the side of the life-boat. It was not much; but better than nothing.

By the time that the sun set we were just like rags, with all the strength gone out of us, and the coming of night was like a blessing.

As the sun set we saw the moon, now about four days old, over our heads, and a little breeze sprung up, which felt as if it came from heaven.

We were able to eat some supper and even began to wish we had saved some coffee, for people never get through wanting, and we, who had only been praying for night an hour before, were wishing for luxuries now.

I wouldn't have minded it so much myself, only for the women. We men were better off; for most of us had pipes, and all three of the sailors had big plugs of navy tobacco in their pockets, while Dr. Sam actually had a box of matches and three cigars in a pocket case.

We made one match go all round, and made shift to light a little fire on the raft with splinters of wood cut with the ax, to attract attention if any one should be near us.*

* A non-nautical lady friend suggests that the people on the raft were very foolish to cut up the only thing between them and death to make a fire. I asked Captain Hutton why they did so, and he replied in these words: "Why, Lord love the ladies! they don't seem to remember that raft was made of masts and yards. Not a stick wasn't less than two feet thick, and some on 'em four. We might have chipped away for a month, and only made the raft lighter by doing it. The chips was all dry, and we needed the fire."

So far no one had seen a sail, and as for Johnston's "living cross," we began to twit him about it as soon as we got smoking, for somehow we seemed not to fear the Flying Dutchman any more, now he wasn't in sight.

Johnston took it good-naturedly, and chaffed back, saying:

"You don't believe in my living cross and I don't believe in your Flying Dutchman. You've shown me the one. I'll show you the other before long. But tell me one thing—what'll you do, suppose the Dutchman comes again this very night?"

I saw the two Danes and old Hackett start and look very uncomfortable, and I couldn't help a shudder myself, while Mame Bruce cried out:

"Oh, heavens! I think I should die if I thought it possible. You ought to know better than to say such things, Mr. Johnston."

"My saying it won't bring him here," said Johnston; "but I think you will see that ship again to-night, cousin. I feel almost sure of it."

Mame Bruce tossed her little head in a spiteful way, and said to her grandfather, softly:

"I wish you'd stop him, grandpa. He's a perfect wretch to try and frighten us all."

The old man, who had been very patient all day, only nodded and said, kind of soothingly:

"Ne'er heed him, lassie, ne'er heed him. Mungo's a good lad, a good lad. Ay, ay, 'twill come if it be to come; and we'll have to bow to the will of the Almighty."

And then we all began to talk about that strange thing as if we couldn't help ourselves, all but Mungo, Sam Peters and Denyse, who sat and listened to us and every now and then asked a question, as if they meant to set us going again.

I could see they were making game of us, and didn't believe in the ghost at all, but I said nothing about it to them, as I felt a little ashamed of myself for believing it, and wouldn't, but for the evidence of my own eyes.

By and by, what with talking, we all got drowsy, when I heard a shriek from the other end of the raft, enough to wake the dead, and Mame Bruce, who had gone off there with Inez Diaz, came running back over the timbers, screaming at every jump, and ran right into Denyse's arms, where she hid her face, sobbing.

We were all up, questioning her, and found she had seen some fearful thing in the water, she didn't know what, all fiery.

The hot weather had made the jelly fish unusually active again and the sea was shining wherever a ripple occurred.

The girl must have seen some big fish, maybe a shark, lighted up and it frightened her.

We went to look over, and it startled us all to see what was there.

Not a shark at all, but a terrible big cuttlefish, looking as if he was made of fire, with his long snaky arms wriggling about, as he swam slowly by the raft.

Then there were all sorts of hideous, ugly fish, like toads and porcupines, swimming about like the squid, and we could see them all plainly by the shining of the sea.

It seemed as if every ugly beast that ever was spawned in the ocean had come to take a look at our raft and not a good-looking fish among them.

I didn't wonder the girl was scared; but after she got over the first fright she came back with the rest of us, and leaned over so far that Denyse had as much as he could do to keep her from tumbling in.

I couldn't help fancying the man didn't more than half dislike his job either, for when she asked him if he was tired holding her and whether she wasn't heavy, he said:

"Oh, no, mi-s, not at all. I'd like to—I mean I could—that is—"

And first thing I knew, he very nearly dropped her, and she let out another screech and he just gripped her up so close that I say to myself: "Oho! that's the way the wind sits."

So we stayed looking at the fish, till a couple of big sharks came along, staring up at us with their wicked eyes; and as soon as the girls saw that, they came away from the edge of the raft, for the two brutes swam close up, rubbing their noses against the timbers; and we weren't over six inches above them if they took a fancy to board us.

We went back to the little fire that we'd kept feeding with chips all the time, and started it into a blaze, when we prepared to go to sleep.

I'd not more than fairly got my eyes shut when Mungo Johnston came to me and whispered:

"Captain, Captain Hutton."

"Well," says I, sleepily.

"The ship's come again," says he, "and she's steering straight toward us. She's seen our light."

"What ship?" says I, sitting up.

"The one you call the Flying Dutchman," he says, with a sort of smile.

You may believe I was up in one moment, and staring out.

Yes; sure as I'm a living man, there was the Flying Dutchman, fiery and ghostly as ever, sailing right down on us, without any wind to speak of, and what there was dead in her teeth.

I don't deny I was scared worse than ever in

all my life before. I just shook like a leaf, and the sweat poured off me.

And to make matters worse, that big Dane, Lars Nelson, was on his feet, close to me, groaning and muttering:

"The third time! The third time! God help us all! He'll take one of us now. Eh, my God, save me!"

And there was this big Dane, that I knew was as brave as a lion, down on his knees, sobbing and praying, with Erik Andersen beside him, the Devil's Cruiser coming right down on us, all afire, and full of Satan's imps.

Every one began groaning, and the women clung together in a group, while the sailors were as much scared as anybody. Old Hyatt was hiding his face and trying to say the Lord's Prayer, while Cyril Adolphus had his head in his mother's lap, trembling all over. Old Bruce sat on a timber, all shrunk up, muttering:

"Eh, sirs, but it's fearsome, fearsome. Lord forgive me for ower-greediness for the siller, and I'll build a new kirk when I get hame."

He used to get very broad in his Scotch when he was upset.

I looked for old Dr. Peters, and the old man was just comforting and petting his wife, and telling her not to be afraid.

Mame Bruce and Inez were close together, staring like wild things at the ghostly ship, and Denyse was near them, talking to them in the same way as the old doctor to his wife.

The young fellow actually did not seem to be a bit afraid, and no more did Mungo Johnston or Dr. Sam Peters.

So much so that, as I'm a living man, I saw Mungo take a brand out of the fire and wave it in the air, as if to try and attract the attention of the Devil's Cruiser.

I couldn't stand that, and I ran to him and threw the brand in the water very angrily, crying:

"I want you to understand that I command this raft, Mr. Johnston, and I'll have no one to call the devil down on us. If he must come he must; but I'll not call him. Put out that fire, boys."

And the sailors dashed water on it in no time and had it out, when the fiery ghost was still more than a mile off, so that I had my hopes we might yet escape unseen, and said so.

But Lars Nelson interrupted me.

"It is no use, captain," he said. "It is the third time, and the Evil One will have his own. He will have us all—if one does not go to him willingly as a sacrifice for the rest. Then he may be satisfied."

Mungo Johnston laughed out loud and called to Sam Peters:

"What do you think of that, Sam? Who shall be our *Iffy Jency-ah*?" (That was how he said it, though I don't know what he meant.) "The gods demand a victim. Will you go for us?"

"Not much!" said Sam, shrugging his shoulders. "I don't leave this raft. These superstitious donkeys will all go crazy, if some one isn't here to put sense into them."

"Very well," answered Mungo, "I'll go out to your Flying Dutchman myself, and show you what fools you all are. If he's the devil, he's welcome to have me, and if he's a real ship, he can't but take us all off this raft."

"How will you go?" cried I, for I actually felt like worshipping the young fellow for his grit.

"There are several planks left in the main-top," said he, "and I'll take an oar and paddle off, if you are willing. If you don't let me, that fellow will miss us in the dark; for you see he's slowly veering out of his course, now he sees our light no longer. Now understand—I'm going to get in his course and let him pick me up. If he's the devil, I'll not come back. If he's an honest ship, I'll make him come here again. Are you willing all?"

You may be sure we all answered yes, and that every one was anxious to hurry him off. We were half afraid and half curious, but none of us would have dared to go out alone.

We hauled out the remains of the main-top, which, as you all know, I suppose, is a half-round platform at the foot of the top-mast, able to hold several men; got it launched; gave Mungo an oar, and saw him go off, sweeping his oar like a paddle from side to side, and getting away from the raft at a pace that convinced me there must be quite a strong current going through the sea.

Then we watched, and saw that the fiery ship had altered her course, and was sweeping up and down on the smooth sea as if seeking something.

What had become of Mungo Johnston no one knew, for the darkness very soon swallowed him up, and we were too low down by the water to see far. But up and down the Flying Dutchman went, his filmy sails always full, on whatever tack they seemed to be set, and we heard no sound but the soft lapping of the sea on the timbers of the raft.

I reckon we must have waited a good hour, when suddenly we saw a little flash of light and a twinkling like the burning of a match down on the sea in the very course the Flying Dutchman was pursuing.

"Mungo's got him," cried Sam Peters. "They see him. The ship alters her course. Now, captain, what do you think of your Flying Dutchman? The devil don't go round hunting for sinners by the light of a match. That's a real ship, or I'm a Dutchman."

And sure enough, the fiery ship sailed right down on the very place where Mungo Johnston had struck his solitary match, and went steadily forward.

Presently we saw it wear round and come up to the wind as I should have said it had been a real ship; and then it remained there for a full two hours and while our people began to say:

"Is it a ship or a devil? What is it? What can it be? Will it come here or not?"

And just at that minute we saw a great flash and a cloud of black smoke that went up to the stars, as if something had blown up, and when it cleared up, the ship had gone.

"The Evil One has taken our friend," said Lars in a low voice. "The trouble is over."

CHAPTER IX.

THE LIVING CROSS.

You may think that, after that, we on the raft felt gloomy and cast down enough. We had all liked poor Mungo Johnston, spite of his homely freckled face and greenish eyes; for that face had always had a brave smile on it, and those eyes were the strongest in the ship.

The two Danes got off into a corner of the raft, and I heard them talking to each other in a low, mournful way, while old Bruce kept saying:

"Eh, sirs, but it's awful, awful! Puir lad, puir lad! My ain flesh and blude; and the deil's got him! Sae young!"

Even Mame Bruce, who had seemed to hate him, was crying with her grandfather, saying:

"Poor Mungo! And we let him go, and we'll never see him again! Oh how wicked I feel!" She even seemed to take a sort of pleasure in spiting Denyse, for I heard her say to him:

"Yes, you can talk, but he went and died for us! Oh, I shall never, never forgive myself. He was my own kinsman."

I thought this rather rough on Denyse; but then I've noticed that girls like to be cruel to men. They don't care who gets hurt as long as they spite some one, and nothing delights them more than setting one man against another. Mame Bruce was a born flirt, and made on purpose to set men by the ears. I'd noticed her trying to get Johnston and Denyse jealous of each other, and it wasn't long now before she turned to Sam Peters, and began to talk to him, giving Denyse the cold shoulder, as we sat on the raft discussing what had happened.

One thing was certain: we were all down on Denyse and Sam Peters, for having pretended the Flying Dutchman was a real ship; and they hadn't a word to say for themselves, now that Mungo Johnston had gone in such a terrible manner.

You may try to pretend you don't believe in ghosts; but I tell you, when you see things with your own eyes, you can't help believing, and we'd seen a skeleton ship sail the seas and vanish into nothing, and we couldn't rub that out of our minds.

I guess we must have sat up there till near morning, afraid to go to sleep, for fear the thing should come again, and found ourselves dropping off from sheer weariness at last.

I woke up myself with the sun's heat striking me and found a light breeze rising, with the sky speckled with clouds, the sea rippling into little waves, all covered with gold spangles, and the fish jumping out of the water all round the raft like as if they were glad it wasn't going to be so hot as the day before.

I saw Lars Nelson standing by the edge of the raft looking out over the sea, and when I spoke to him the man gave a start, and I saw his face was wet with tears.

"What are you thinking of?" says I.

"I was thinking, captain, that I was a coward last night," he said; "and that if we had it to do over again, that boy shouldn't have gone where he did."

"Why not, Lars?" says I.

"Because," says he, "he was too good for the devil to have him. I'm strong and able to fight. Ah, captain! Ragnar Oleson would be ashamed of me now."

"Never mind," says I, to comfort him. "The devil can't hurt a good man; and he was a good one. You know how Ragnar Oleson fought the devil, and beat him. Maybe Mungo Johnston can do the same."

Lars shook his head.

"No, no; we shall never see him again, captain, unless one of us follows him with a piece of the true cross, to guard him from evil."

"A piece of the true cross!" says I. "What stuff are you talking, Lars! Where'll we get that, and what use would it be? I begin to believe there are such things as devils on earth, but I can't swallow everything, you know."

And no more I could. My father was an elder in the church and superintendent of a Bible-class for twenty-five years, and he'd trained me up to despise all sorts of low superstitions.

But Lars only shook his head.

"You don't believe it," he says—"I know that. You Americans don't know what it is to have real miracles, but we're used to them in Denmark. There is a piece of the true cross in the church at Singapore, and I'm going to steal it, if ever we get there, and go hunting for that poor boy. I owe that to the good Lord for sparing me last night, when I ought to have been taken."

He spoke quite quiet and reasonable, and looked as if he was changed for the better. The fierce look was gone out of his eyes, and he was as gentle as a lamb.

We ate some breakfast, such as it was; but we found more trouble come on us with the light.

The heat of the day before had started the fresh water to rotting, and it was all full of worms, so we had to boil it and throw out the worms before we could drink any. And I saw, plain enough, that before night it would be so bad, boiling would not save it. We didn't say much. We had begun to get gloomy and desperate since that fiery ghost had been dogging us, bringing more misfortune every time she came and we just sat down und waited, as patient as we could, for the coming of a sail.

The breeze cooled the sunlight, so we could live; and yet it was hot enough to make us drowsy, so we dozed away most of the morning till I heard Lars Nelson, all of a sudden roar out at the top of his voice:

"The cross! the cross! The living cross! Holy Jesu be thanked! We shall be saved!"

I looked at him, and saw him capering like a madman, and staring up at the sky to the southeast.

The people roused up and tried to see what he was staring at, when we made out what looked just like a white cross in the sky, moving on toward us.

At first I was puzzled, but in another moment I knew what it was—an albatross, floating along with his wings spread out, and never a feather stirring. If the bird had given a flap of his broad wings he wouldn't have looked so like a cross, but it's the nature of them to go that way for days and days; for an albatross sometimes won't go near land for weeks at a time, and seems to sleep on the wing.

And there came that blessed bird, all shining white as snow, as true a cross as I ever saw; and there were Lars Nelson and Erik Andersen, big strong men, crying like babies and laughing again just to see it; for all we sailors knew that our troubles would soon be over.

I'm not superstitious, and I never was; but what I know I know; and I never knew a ship sail on Friday, but what she had bad luck, while I never knew an albatross come but what it brought good luck.

And that albatross was coming for us just as straight as a loaded bee flying to a hive.

Every minute it grew plainer and plainer, till we could see its head and body, and on it went till it was right overhead, when it began to wheel round and round, coming lower and lower every minute, till at last it settled down on the end of our raft and looked at us, just as tame as a chicken.

I've seen albatrosses settle on ships before. They seem to know the sailors won't hurt them. This fellow sat there and looked at us as much as to say:

"Well, haven't you something for me?"

And Lars Nelson ran to the meat-box before any one could stop him, and had out a can of corned beef, cutting it open with his sheath-knife.

"Hold on," says I, "we may want that ourselves."

"No, no," he cries. "The blessed bird must be fed, or he'll leave us and take the luck with him. I'll give up my share to him, captain. We'll see a sail in the place where he came from."

And he emptied out all the meat before the albatross, that took it, as tame as a chicken, and ate it all up.

CHAPTER X.

THE SAIL.

I HADN'T the heart to stop the Dane; he seemed to believe his story so well, and I let him feed the albatross, which after it had ate the meat just settled down on the raft with its long wings spread out as much like a cross as ever, and shut its eyes as if it proposed to go to sleep.

Lars Nelson came tip-toeing back, and whispered to us not to disturb the bird or it would leave us.

"Look where he came from," says he, "and if we don't see a sail soon I'll never believe in the cross again."

So we all sat gazing out to the southeast for the rest of that day, with the albatross sleeping on the end of the raft till the sun was getting close to the horizon, when Lars spoke up, as quiet and confident as could be, and says he:

"I told you so. There comes a sail at last."

And he was right.

Before the sun had quite set we could make out a big brown sail very plainly, and it came at a pace that showed it must belong to a Malay prow, one of the liveliest craft in the world, or rather two of them tied together, for the Malays build their vessels in the catamaran style, and they fairly fly through the water.

If we'd been off the coast of Borneo I wouldn't have been over much pleased to see the prow, for half the Borneo Malays are pirates, but I knew that all the trade of Java and Sumatra is carried on in the native craft, and I more than suspected this fellow to be an honest trader, though how he came to be so far out of his usual longitude I didn't pretend to know.

I said as much to the passengers when they began to feel scary, as the prow came in full view, and their heads were full of pirate stories.

Lars Nelson put in his oar, as usual, and told them:

"The good Lord sent him to us, and you'll have to believe it now. I never saw one of those prows within five hundred miles of this before. The Lord sent it after us to save us."

We didn't argue the matter, for we were only too thankful to see the prow, without quarrelling over where she came from.

Before dark she was in full sight to her water-line, and we were waving anything we could get to signal her, while she came on as if her people saw us.

The moon was in her fifth night down and gave plenty of light while we kindled our fire again in a hurry, and made all the blaze we could.

And an hour after dark the Malay ranged up alongside the raft, dropped a canoe to board us, and sent three men in it, in their gay turbans and jackets, though the ignorant brutes didn't know enough to wear trowsers, but just had a sort of a short petticoat that they call a *sarong*, and their spindle shanks bare.

One of them came on the raft and began to talk Dutch to us. Sam Peters knew some of it, for he was going to settle in Batavia, and the two Danes talked it pretty well, it being like their own lingo.

We found out, as I thought, that the prow was a trader from Bencoolen, going to Singapore, and she'd been blown out of her course by the tail end of the same typhoon that had wrecked the poor Spindrift.

And as these Malays mostly creep along the coast and only put to sea when they know they can sight land inside of two days on a steady course, there isn't one in a hundred knows anything of latitude and longitude—no, nor one in a thousand.

And this fellow was as glad to see us as we were to see him, for he didn't know where he was; and when I told him I could show him on a map, he just hugged me and rubbed his nose against mine in their fashion, swearing he'd do anything for me if I'd only show him how to get to Singapore.

I asked him if he'd seen any sails in these parts, for I had a desire to find out if he'd seen anything of the Flying Dutchman.

He said yes, but only one—a stranger ship that they never could get near, try as they might; for it sailed off into the wind's eye, and they hadn't got a good sight of it.

Then I knew he must have seen the Flying Dutchman in broad daylight, and I began to wonder how it would all end, as we shipped our folks aboard the prow, where we were all pretty crowded, but mighty thankful to have got off that raft, which had once seemed like heaven to us.

Yes, we left the raft at last, and all we took with us was my navigator's chest and the box of canned meats.

I knew that as the wind lay for us we wouldn't be more than a day or two in sighting the coast of Sumatra, and after that we'd be all right.

I found the Malay, whose name was Muda Sing, a good sort of a fellow, and a Christian, too.

He had been brought up by the Dutch, and knew a few words of English besides Dutch and Malay.

He hadn't so much as a chart of the Sumatra coast on board, and yet he told me he'd sailed all round among the islands, and once had been blown over to the coast of Australia, while he could draw a pretty good map of the Malay Archipelago out of his head, and knew every foot of Sumatra and Java coasts.

I showed him my charts in the chest, and he knew everything in a minute; and when I pointed out our place at last noon observation, he was delighted, and rubbed my nose again.

His crew was only five men and a boy, all Malays from Sumatra, and our fourteen coming into the prow promised to eat them out of house and home, for they had only started provisioned for a week.

But he made us welcome to all he had and we sat up half the night talking over our late trials and woke up next day to find the coast of Atcheen in the north of Sumatra in sight.

Well, I reckon I've not very much more of this yarn to spin, and I'll cut the rest of it short off.

Muda took us into Atcheen, and there the Dutch treated us very kind, and helped us on to Singapore in a large prow going there.

Mr. Bruce's name was too well known to need much introduction anywhere in the East Indies, and by the time we'd been two days in Singapore, we were the lions of the place and all set up with money from the bankers.

In these days of ocean cables, it don't take long to get money from one side of the world to the other, and Bruce, Hilton & Co. had dead loads of it.

The old man paid me and the men off, handsome, after we'd gone before the consul to swear to the loss of the ship and we were offered a free passage home on a man-of-war coming in from the Asiatic squadron.

Bruce, Hilton & Co. got their insurance on the Spindrift, and the whole of my passengers staid in Singapore waiting for a Batavia packet while I went off in the Albany frigate with Hackett.

Denyse got a birth on the ship George Washington as first mate; and the Danes drifted off, I couldn't tell where.

But one thing I noticed in the Singapore people made me mad, and I reckon it made the rest mad too. Say what we might and swear to it ever so hard they wouldn't believe we'd seen the Flying Dutchman.

The consul, a young fellow, stuck up as they make them, and always blowing about "his friends General Brown and Senator Smith," who got him his place, had the impudence to laugh when I told him about the fiery ghost ship, and asked me if I'd ever had the jim-jams.

I took him down a peg or two by telling him I couldn't afford to drink that much. I left it to consuls and such-like suckers. And I told him it was none of his business what I swore to so long as I swore to it, not he, and I'd trouble him to attend to his own affairs.

My young man said no more, but kept up a grinning all the time he was taking down the evidence, and I could see that he didn't believe a word of it. The passengers were examined too, and I saw it kind of staggered him when they all joined in the same story, till it came to old Doc Peters.

And I was just surprised to see how stubborn some men are in their unbelief. The old doctor and Sam were both what they call *materializers*, or something of the sort, and both of them swore that the ship we'd seen wasn't the Flying Dutchman at all, but a real vessel disguised in some way.

The consul questioned them and Denyse close, but couldn't get any explanation out of them; and when he heard of Mungo Johnston going off to the fiery ship and getting blown up, he grinned again, and said:

"Gentlemen, up to that point, I believe your evidence; but I think your eyes must have deceived you in that blow-up and vanish business. They can do that on the stage, but not out in the open sea."

They all shut up at that, and Sam Peters looked red, as he said:

"Well, you know, consul, we can't explain everything. I can only swear to what I saw, and you can't knock that out of me."

"So our worthy friends here say," says the consul, with another grin, but he signed our papers at last, and sent us off.

And that's all I've got to tell you about the Flying Dutchman of 1880, that carried off poor Mungo Johnston.

I went home in the Albany, and then I found that our ill-luck at sea was not all that we'd inherited from that accursed devil-ship. Three months to a day from the time I sighted the demon from the deck of the Spindrift my poor Maria and the kids were all taken down with typhoid fever, and when I got home I found my little business gone, my wife dead, and only one boy left alive out of my family of five souls.

The doctor said it was sewer gas, but I knew better. It was the evil eye of the Flying Dutchman, and he wouldn't be denied. Sewer gas might have killed them, but if I hadn't seen that ship we'd never have had any sewer gas. I'd lived in that same house for thirty-five years before, and never had no trouble with sewer gas. No, I'm not what's called superstitious, but what I know, I know.

The Flying Dutchman just blasted my life for me, and if any of you ever has the misfortune to see him he'll blast your lives too.

As for me, I was quite broke down by coming home as I did. My brother Dan is a farmer in St. Lawrence county, and he promised to take care of little Abijah—he was weak and sickly after the fever—and bring him up where he'd never see the ocean or the Flying Dutchman.

I sold out the good-will of what was left of the business—it wasn't much—and put out the money for little Bije at interest, so as he'd have something to keep him from going to sea.

And then I came here, where I hope to spend the rest of my few days, saying my prayers and reading my Bible like a good Christian, and thinking over the hard times that wait on those who go down to the sea in ships.

I've written this down to please some as have heard me tell the story, and my friend, Mr. Poyntz, he allows he'll hunt up the other people in my story and find out what they've got to say about the Flying Dutchman—if it's a ghost or not. I've told him he's welcome to try, but there are some things nobody can find out. Seeing is believing, and I've seen what I tell about.

JOHN HUTTON,
Master Mariner.

PART II.

MAMIE BRUCE'S STORY.*

CHAPTER I.

DENYSE'S PROMISE.

SINGAPORE, 1880.—My dear grandfather has asked me to write down an account of our adventures in the East Indies, and I hardly know how to begin. I was never meant for an authoress, or I suppose it would come very easy to me; but I must admit I do *hate* writing. I always get my fingers black with the ink; and all the soap I can use won't take off the stains. And then the words won't divide themselves right in the lines, and I do *hate* to waste a big piece of paper, because grandpa says I ought not to be cutting words in half at the end of a line, on account of the printers not being able to read it fast enough. Just as if I knew anything about printers, except that they always have black hands and talk about sticks, and pies, and galleys, and takes; and a number of other things just as stupid.

But I have always obeyed grandpa ever since I came to him—oh, ever so many years ago—a little midget of five, with no father or mother; and he has been everything to me since then. Sometimes I think I must have tried him a good deal when I was a child, for I know I was spoiled, and used to be very saucy; but he was always good to me and never scolded me since I can remember. And since I have grown older he has often told me, with tears in his eyes, that I am the last of the Bruces; that they have all gone before me, and that when I am married the old name will perish.

But I always tell him I don't want to get married, and neither I do. I think it will be real nice to be an old maid and laugh at the men all your life, when you know they don't want you, but your money.

To be sure, a poor old maid is different; but that has nothing to do with my story, so I may as well begin where grandpa told me, after we got safe to Singapore and I began to think we must be destined for something awfully romantic.

So I bought a new diary at once. Fancy buying a real East Indian diary in a town full of rajahs, and Malays, and pirates in red turbans, with beautiful gold-handled daggers in the loveliest shawls you ever saw round their waists, and going around with bare feet, too. But it wasn't a real Oriental diary after all, though I bought it of a young man who looked like a prince out of the Arabian Nights. I thought it was, till that impudent Dr. Peters—the young doctor, I mean—showed me a little label pasted in the cover, which read "Tragacanth and Van Guild, Manufacturing Stationers, 275 Nassau street, New York." And then he asked how much I paid for it and told me I'd come half-way round the world to get something I could have got at home for one-third the price.

It did make me feel rather flat, I own, and next day I bought another, about which there was no mistake, for it had a Chinese label on it and was made of silk paper. And when I showed that to my gentleman, he hadn't a word to say against it, except that I ought to keep my diary in Chinese to be in character. But I told him it might as well be Chinese, for all he would ever read it, and I saw that he didn't like that a bit, for he had been making eyes at me all the way to Singapore on that funny Malay ship, just because I flirted with him a little once or twice on purpose to tease another person who thought himself irresistible.

And after counting them all up, there was not one of them that was worthy to tie the shoelaces of my poor cousin, who lies deep, deep down in the bosom of the Indian Ocean, never to come back again.

Poor Mungo! To be sure, he was very, very plain; but he was so good to every one, and so brave and patient. And he saved my life when I might have been swallowed up in that terrible raging sea. And he took all my insolence so quietly, though I knew I treated him like a dog. And grandpa has told me so many things about him since we lost him. Poor grandpa! He actually had an idea of bringing us two together some day, all on account of some old Scotch rhyme that says:

"Johnston, sire, and Bruce for mither,
Mak' a bairn to pass all ither."

And he has told me how poor Mungo knew so much, and had taught it all to himself, and I—

* If the serious reader be at times shocked by a certain tone of frivolity apparent in Miss Mamie's story, I beg to remind him that girls will be girls, and that Miss Bruce was not quite seventeen at the time she indited her confessions. I own that there are parts I should like to strike out as decidedly below the dignity of history. Miss Bruce starts to tell about the Flying Dutchman and diverges into her own flirtations to a reprehensible extent. Still, I have concluded to let it all stand, as showing how the events described struck her, as a girl of seventeen. As a married man and father of a family, I cannot defend her conduct at all times.

THE EDITOR.

he had never presumed on his relationship to him, except to fight like a tiger for his interests when he was only a clerk in the firm and one of the partners tried to cheat grandpa.

But it's no use thinking of it all now. Perhaps if I had known it all before he went away—but no—I couldn't have done different. I *couldn't* marry a man with his face all full of freckles, and when he had red hair and green eyes. I couldn't. But Mungo was a good, brave fellow, and I shall never, *never* forget my cousin.

I must say, though, I *don't*, at the bottom of my heart, believe as Captain Hutton did about the way he went off. To be sure the Bible has a good deal of talk about the devil going round like a roaring lion, and grandpa says I shall be burnt up if I don't believe every word in that blessed book. But I've looked it all over, and I can't find a word about the devil sailing about in a ship; and it *does* say that sailors see the works of the Lord.

And I don't believe that if the Lord rules the deep sea, he would let the devil go sailing about, picking up good young men like Mungo Johnston that never harmed a fly.

But I must not go on talking about that, or I shall never do anything useful. Grandpa says there are some things that it is sinful to ask about and that we must believe what we have been taught and trust in the mercy of an Infinite Providence. So I'll go on and tell what happened to us all as well as I can, and if I make any mistakes in spelling I hope the printers will please remember that I couldn't get a dictionary handy, and spell the word their own way.

I won't say anything about the storm, because I never could understand the ropes of a ship; and the poor Spindrift had such a quantity of ropes that nobody could possibly count them.

Mr. Denyse tried to teach me the names of parts of the ship; but all I could remember was that they were horrid, and I don't see why sailors can't use proper language. We women don't talk about spankers and scuppers, and hawsers and cat-heads, and monkeys' tails, and I do think they ought to pass a law to stop the sort of talk that goes on in ships.

All I remember is that it was very horrible, and I was very sick, and that when we got to Singapore I wanted to know if we couldn't go back to New York on the train, so we'd never have to cross the sea again. But of course I knew that was impossible, as soon as they showed me the map, and I seem to have learned more geography since I came here than ever I did at school, though I've never so much as looked at anything but maps and asked questions of Mr. Denyse and grandpa.

Poor Mr. Denyse! He had to go away from us soon after we got to Singapore, and he came to bid me good-by. Grandpa was out with Dr. Peters, and Inez had gone to buy me some things in the bazar, when the Malay waiter, with his turban and daggers, like all the rest of them, showed the poor fellow in to me.

"Sahib see missy," he said; and I knew from the look in poor Denyse's face that he was going away forever.

I'd been cross to him lately, on account of feeling so sorry for my poor cousin; and now I couldn't help wishing that he would stay a little longer—so I said to him:

"Why, Mr. Denyse, I thought you had deserted us. I'm very glad to see you."

He flushed up, and then got pale again, and said in a low, sad tone:

"Times are changed, Miss Bruce. A sailor ashore stands on a lower scale of the ladder than a cabin passenger. I have been a fool, and I've suffered for it; but I'm going to sea again."

"Oh, dear me!" said I. "I wonder you can dare to, after the trials we passed through together. I feel as if I should never dare to go on the water again."

"And yet," he said, "I shall always look back to those days as the happiest in my life."

"What days?" I asked him, without thinking what he meant, like a little fool as I was.

He burst out, all in a minute.

"The days when I felt I was of some use to you. Oh, Miss Bruce! I know I'm a fool, but I forgot all about the difference between us on that dear old raft. I hated to leave it; I loved every stick of timber in it, because your foot had pressed them. I wished we might float about there forever and ever, and I dreaded to see a sail—"

I saw I had got to stop him somehow, so I began to laugh, and he turned red, and gave me a chance to say:

"Well, well, you have singular tastes, Mr. Denyse! For my part, I thought it was horrid; for I know I looked like a fright, and I hadn't so much as a hairpin left. And then you know what bad water we had."

"I forgot it all," he answered, looking out of the window as if he was thinking it over. "I only remembered *you* were there. Ah, well, I was a fool. I might have known better."

Then he was silent, and looked so sorrowful and handsome—for he was a splendid-looking fellow, with curly brown hair and a perfectly lovely beard cut in that darling English style,

like the Prince of Wales you know—that I couldn't help saying:

"I shall always remember you kindly, Mr. Denyse, and I dare say, when the peril is forgotten, I shall think of the good brave men that fought for us weak women so nobly. You and my poor cousin, and the captain, I shall always think of."

"Ay, ay," he said quietly. "They were good men, none better. The captain is a sailor of the old school, every inch of him, and he kept us all up like a man. Strange too, that, with all his common sense, he should exhibit such childish superstition about that ship. Your cousin and I couldn't account for it."

"For what?" said I, for I wanted to draw him away from what I feared was coming.

"For his fancies about that vessel that picked up your cousin at last," he said. "Surely, Miss Bruce, you don't believe in ghosts too?"

"I don't know what you mean by ghosts," said I stiffly, "but I know it brought us calamity every time it came, and I know that I shall never see my poor cousin again alive."

He looked at me in a strange way, and said rather dryly:

"You mean you think your cousin is dead, Miss Bruce."

I could not help the tears coming into my eyes.

"I fear there's no doubt of it. He said he would be back if it were a real ship; and he never came."

"Pardon me," returned Denyse; "I think you misunderstand him. He said, if it were an *honest* ship, he would come back. There are no such things as ghosts, you know. Your cousin was picked up by that ship, and may be on board of her now."

"Then why don't he come back?" I asked. "Ah, it's no use hoping, Mr. Denyse. We shall never see him again."

"I don't see why not," he answered. "I'll admit it looked strange the way he disappeared; but in these days of science there's hardly a limit to the optical tricks that may be played on people, and, out in these seas, it is easier than anywhere else."

"Why so?" I asked, for I began to believe him, he looked so quiet and confident.

"Because the people in these seas have invented any number of tricks themselves, Miss Bruce! Hindoos, Japs and Chinese are all masters of hocus-pocus, and it would make your hair stand up to see the things they do."

"But you are a sailor," said I, "and yet you don't seem to be afraid."

He gave a slight smile and a sigh after it as he said:

"Yes, I am a sailor, and I love the sea, too. Sometimes I wish I had chosen another profession; for this only emphasises social distinctions on shore. But I made my bed at thirteen, and I must lie on it now. I am not superstitious, because I have tried to learn all I could about physical science. But I weary you, Miss Bruce. I beg your pardon. I only came to bid you good-by."

And he began to look silly again just as I was getting interested in him. If men only knew how easy it is to win women's hearts, we wouldn't have much chance. It's lucky they don't.

"Well, Mr. Denyse," I said, and I fear my voice shook a little, "if you must go, good-by. I shall always remember you."

"Will you?" said he, sadly. "Ah, well, perhaps you will, for a week. It's my own fault. Good-by, Miss Bruce. God bless you forever and ever. We may not meet again—"

"Oh, yes, we shall," I said to comfort him, for he looked awfully handsome and sad. "Grandpa is going to Batavia as soon as we can find a ship going there, and, who knows, you may be there, too. And, Mr. Denyse, you say you think my cousin is alive yet—"

"Certainly I do," said he.

"Then let me tell you this. Find my cousin for me, and grandpa and I will never cease to be grateful to you."

He brightened up in a moment and squeezed my hand so that he hurt me, saying:

"Miss Bruce, God bless you. I'll find him, if he's alive, and bring him to you. Good-by."

Then he was off, and I had a good cry all to myself.

CHAPTER II.

THE DUTCHMAN'S LEGEND.

GRANDPA came back to the hotel with old Dr. Peters to tell me that we were going to dine at the Governor's palace the next day, and that our consul had been very kind, in trying to make us comfortable and get us a safe vessel to go to Batavia, for we'd made up our minds not to try any more sailing vessels in that part of the world.

Grandpa said that if the poor Spindrift had been a steamer we should never have been caught in the storm—so the sailors told him.

But there were no steamers going to Batavia, and the consul said that it might be some time before one arrived, and we might even have to charter one all to ourselves if we insisted on not going in a sailing vessel.

I told grandpa that he knew best, but if we went in another sailing vessel I know I should die of fright, for I could never forget that horrid thing that dogged us into the storm, and came back again to gloat over our misery.

Dr. Sam Peters was wild to get off anyhow, and Mrs. Peters told me that she was afraid he was going in another sailing ship with Mr. Denyse, a vessel going to Batavia.

I noticed that Mrs. Peters didn't seem at all anxious to have him go, and I must say that, for a married woman, her flirting was *perfectly awful*. Young girls are expected to make themselves pleasing, but a married woman ought to be ashamed of herself to carry on the way Mrs. Peters did all through our voyage in the Spindrift.

But I flatter myself I put *her* nose out of joint as soon as I set myself seriously to work to take Dr. Sam from her, and I didn't half try neither.

We all met together that evening at the dinner-table, and then Dr. Sam bid us good-by, and told us that his vessel would sail that very night at high tide, and that he couldn't miss the opportunity.

I'm sure I didn't mind his going, for he was one of those conceited, sneering young men that I hate; but I'd made him humble enough to me, you may be sure, and it did me good to see how he choked up when he said good-by to me especially.

I wouldn't even shake hands with him, and laughed at his long face, telling him that when we got to Batavia we should be sure to find him married to some Malay princess, and dressed up with shawls and daggers like the rest of them.

"And you'll forget all about me when you have a wife who wears bangles and blackens her teeth," said I, when he tried to talk sentiment.

This happened on the veranda after dinner, when he got me alone for a few minutes, and he began to look solemn and swear he'd never forget me to the last day and—you know the sort of stuff men talk when they want to fool girls.

So I just shut him up by telling him I knew one person who would never, never forget him.

"And who's that?" said he, quite taken off his guard.

"Your aunt by marriage," said I, with a smile as innocent as I could make it. "I think she's the most affectionate aunt I ever knew in all my life."

That stopped him, and he didn't say much more, but I heard him muttering what I felt sure were very naughty words as he went away to do his packing.

That evening Mr. Gilbert, our consul, came to call on us, to tell grandpa that there was a steam vessel in harbor going to Batavia, but he feared we couldn't get a passage on her, as her owner used her as a yacht.

"And who is the owner?" asked grandpa.

"I'll willingly pay a gude price, Mr. Gilbert—not exorbitant, ye understand, but just a gude price—to be put on my way to Batavia, sir. We have a branch hoose there, sir, and my puir young kinsman, Mungo Johnston, was going to take charge of it after I'd set things straight there, and now I'm much afraid there'll be trouble in the hoose if I don't get there quick. Who's the owner?"

"A Dutch gentleman called Vanderdecken," said Mr. Gilbert, rather slowly. "He's a queer sort of customer, Mr. Bruce, and not over civil to strangers, but he's as rich as—well, sir, you're not a pauper yourself by any means—"

"No, no," interrupted grandpa, "not a pauper, but I'm no sae rich as people think me, Mr. Gilbert. Indeed no, sir. I have to look sharp after the pennies yet for this lassie here—eh, Mamie? And ye say the gentleman's unco rich, sir."

"One of the richest men in the Dutch East Indies, and that means a good deal, Mr. Bruce. He's not pure blood, you know."

"Not pure blood, sir? What d'ye mean?" asked grandpa.

"I mean he's not pure Dutch, though his name's Dutch enough. Here in Singapore they call him the *Flying Dutchman*."

Mr. Gilbert said this with a malicious look at me, for he and all the rest had made great fun of our story of the mysterious spirit ship, but he might have spared his wit, for grandpa turned white as a sheet, and ejaculated:

"The Flying Dutchman! Eh, sirs, and why, why? Don't joke on a serious subject like this, Maister Gilbert. Consider I'm an auld man, sir, and muckle shaken."

And I went to him to pet him, and I think Mr. Gilbert must have seen how I felt, for he looked penitent, and began.

"I'm sure I beg your pardon, but I'd no idea you really believed in such—never mind. Don't be alarmed, it's only a name. You know the Dutch set much store on what little history they have got, and of their few legends they are as proud as peacocks. The old story of the Flying Dutchman you know of course, Miss Bruce."

"No, I don't," said I, shortly, "and I don't

want to know it, if there are any more ghosts in it. I've seen and heard enough of it."

He smiled in the same supercilious way as that odious Dr. Sam; but he smoothed it over instantly; for I could see he was very anxious to please grandpa.

So he said, addressing him:

"The legend is that one Captain Philip Vander Decken, bound from Batavia to Holland, being kept back by contrary gales at the Cape of Good Hope, and being recommended to try another course, became so enraged that he swore before God he would keep the course he was then sailing, if he had to keep it till the day of judgment. And his punishment for blasphemy was that he was compelled to do it. You see why they call this man the Flying Dutchman? Simply because he has the same name as the hero of the legend, and I believe claims to be his descendant. That's all."

"But how can he be the man's descendant?" asked grandpa.

"Was he a real man?"

"I believe he was. Simply, he was a Dutch captain with a hot head and a bad tongue, who was lost at sea, like hundreds of others; and not being heard of again, this legend was started by the sailors. This one is called by the same Christian name, and I've known more than one of the family who was as proud as could be of the family ghost."

"And reasonable enough, sir," said grandpa, seriously. "We Bruces have a family ghaist of our ain, and sae have the Johnstones. Ye're not a Scot, sir, or ye wadna flee at ghaists. Maybe the time will come ye'll find out for ver-sell that there's such. And this Maister Vanderdecken, ye say 'll be at the dinner."

"I believe so. He has promised to come, and I'll see that you are properly introduced to him. He's a peculiar man and may invite you to go with him, if he knows you need his help. But I wouldn't offer to pay him, for you understand his ship is a yacht."

"Eh, sirs, if he'll tak' us I'll no say a ward about siller," said grandpa, chuckling. "I'll promise ye to be unco delicate with the gentleman, Maister Gilbert; and I thank ye kindly for the help ye've given us to-night, sir. We'll see ye at the dinner?"

Mr. Gilbert made a grimace.

"I suppose so. I have to go, you know. There's a levee after it, and if Vanderdecken doesn't come to one he may to the other. Good-day, Mr. Bruce."

And off he went.

I confess he had raised my curiosity to see this very proud and peculiar Mr. Vanderdecken, and I was on pins and needles till the time came to go to the dinner, when we all went, got up in the most elaborate fashion, for it was a full-dress affair.

I trembled a good deal when the gorgeous footman announced us.

CHAPTER III.

THE STATE DINNER.

AFTER all, it was a very stupid, tiresome thing, that state dinner.

To be sure, it was very splendid, and there were some big people there, whose names sounded very grand to my American ears, but that didn't make it any more interesting after all.

There was one real lord, a very handsome man too, with a lovely white beard, though he didn't look so old except for the color of his hair.

He had the most beautiful dark eyes I ever saw in a man, and must have been a great lady-killer in his day.

He took me in to dinner, and was introduced to me as Lord Teviot, though I hardly caught his name in my flutter at meeting a real live lord.

But he was so kind and gentle in his manner that I soon found him delightful company, and he took away some of the dullness of the dinner.

But the man I had expected to see—the wonderful Mr. Vanderdecken—was not there, and after we ladies had gone up-stairs, in the odious English fashion, I found that the rest were all as much disappointed as I was, for he was an object of great interest to every one.

Lady Teviot was introduced to me, up-stairs, by the Governor's lady, and I found her very much like her husband, with a young face and snow-white hair.

She began talking about this same wonderful Vanderdecken very soon, and told me that she had never seen him; but that every one had heard of him, all over the East Indies, for his riches, his queer eccentric ways, and his wonderful yacht, that was able to sail so fast and was said to be furnished like a palace.

"The Governor tells me he will drop in at the levee, very likely; for he said as much in his letter excusing his absence from the dinner. Then we shall see him for the first time."

"Then you are as curious as I am to see him?" said I.

Lady Teviot looked a little grave and thoughtful, as she said:

"No, my dear; not exactly curious. Teviot and I have no curiosity left in us now. We've both seen so much and suffered so much. But

we have a reason for wishing to see Mr. Vanderdecken."

"So have we," said I. "We want to go to Batavia, and I'm so frightened at sailing ships, I'm going to beg him for a passage in his steamer, if he looks at all good-natured."

Lady Teviot looked at me as if she was very much shocked at something—I suppose my Yankee freedom of manner, so different to the stiff English ways—and she said, very coldly, indeed:

"Ah, exactly. I suppose you've not heard anything about Mr. Vanderdecken's character?"

"Character? No. Except that they call him the Flying Dutchman, so I suppose he must be very delightfully wicked and romantic."

Lady Teviot looked still more shocked, and answered sharply:

"Wicked? Yes. I don't call it either romantic or delightful. In the first place, he's not a pure blood at all, only a Eurasian, I'm told."

"What is that?" I asked.

"I mean that his mother was a Malay or Hindoo, or some of these black or yellow creatures. They are all bad, every one of them. My dear, you're new to the East, and I've lived here a long time. Take my advice and don't you have anything to say to Mr. Vanderdecken, if you see him."

"But you want to see him?" said I, for I don't like to be put down by any one, even if she be a lady of rank and title.

"I do," she answered quietly, but not to speak to him. I have an idea Teviot or I may recognize him—that's all."

"Recognize him as what?" I asked.

Lady Teviot gave a slight shudder as she answered:

"Never mind, my dear. Don't ask now. I can only tell you this. It relates to a time when my hair turned white in one night, and yet I was only a girl of seventeen, like you."

"And did your husband's turn at the same time?" I couldn't help asking, for I had remarked how strange it was that they should both have such white hair and young faces.

She bowed her head gravely.

"Yes. Poor Douglas! And he was only twenty-two! We had been married but three months. Don't ask any more, my dear. It was during the mutiny. It's one of those memories we would like to blot out, but cannot do it. Ah, here come the gentlemen."

And that broke off our talk, but left me wondering what she meant about the mutiny. What mutiny? Where was it? What had she to do with it?

I had not got through thinking over this when grandpa joined me, and I asked him, at which he seemed amazed, saying:

"Eh, my bairn, dinna ye ken about the Great Sepoy Mutiny? 'Twas Lord Teviot that blew sae mony men frae the mouth of the cannon, when he was joost Sir Douglas Teviot. I'm tauld he was a raging demon after his hair turned white."

"But what turned it white?" I asked him, eagerly.

"Tut, tut, my bairn!" he said; "ye mustn't speer too mony questions. Young lassies must learn there are some things they mustn't seek to know about. 'Twas a sair trial to the mon that could whiten his hair; but he took a sair, sair revenge. Noo, Mamie, ye'll joost keep my ain lassie as we gang into the levee. I'll no trust ye where ye can go speering questions of ilka body ye meet."

Grandpa had a good many old-country prejudices; and the older he got, the stronger they got. He seemed to think that girls ought to be kept as if they were in a nunnery all the time, and never have a chance to learn anything of the world like boys.

So we fell into the procession with the rest of the guests to go to the great hall, where they held the levee; and very soon the place was full, and I was too busy watching the people to think of anything else.

Such funny creatures as they were! Coming in with bare feet, with their dresses all covered with jewels and gold. There were rajahs, and princes, and sultans, glittering with diamonds and emeralds.

There was Mr. Whampoa, a rich Chinese merchant, who had on a brocade dress, stiff enough to stand alone, with a diamond button in his cap that must have cost a fortune, and a Japanese gentleman, Mr. Hieraskuro, who was said to be richer even than Mr. Whampoa, though he didn't dress so fine.

And in the midst of the levee I heard the ushers call out:

"MR. VANDERDECKEN!" and then I knew he was coming.

I believe we all stretched our necks to look when we heard the name, and I looked round to see where Lord and Lady Teviot were.

I saw them close together, looking out over the crowd, for they were both tall people, with a singular, intent, hungry gaze. The face of Lord Teviot, usually so mild, gentle, and handsome, had changed. His dark eyes were flashing, and his mouth was set in a grim look that made me think what a wretch he might be if he had the power.

Lady Teviot looked even worse than he did.

There was a hard, pitiless line about her mouth that reminded me of a picture I once saw of Herodias, when her daughter brought her the head of John the Baptist in a charger. She looked as if she could have been just such another as Herodias.

Then I saw husband and wife turn away and whisper to each other, and when I looked again their faces were calm and indifferent, as if they had not found what they sought.

And just then Mr. Vanderdecken came up to pay his respects to the Governor, and I saw him plainly and heard his voice.

I must say I was disappointed. I had expected to see a prince in gold and jewels, but he was just dressed in simple black, with a white necktie and kids, for all the world as if he were in New York at a party.

He had not even a diamond stud in his shirt-front, and his watch-chain was quite thin and light.

He was rather tall, and not too stout, but his face was the thing about him that made you forget his dress.

He had great, solemn, dark eyes, that suited well with his hair. His complexion was very dark compared to mine, but looked white beside the Malays and Hindoos, while he was clean-shaven except for a small black mustache that did not hide his teeth when he smiled. And such lovely teeth I hardly ever saw before.

And this was Mr. Vanderdecken.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. VANDERDECKEN.

THE Governor was very civil to Mr. Vanderdecken, and expressed his regrets not to have seen him at dinner. I listened for his answer, for I wanted to hear him speak, which he did in a soft, deep voice, that reminded me of an organ tone:

"I was detained by a case of distress. You know we Hollanders are compelled to keep near each other when you men of Albion are round us, or you might capture all our goods. One of my countrymen appealed to me, and I had to take my choice of missing your feast or seeing him suffer, your excellency."

"But you're here now, and we are very glad to see you," said the Governor, blandly. "As soon as the reception is over there are several people very anxious to be introduced to the Flying Dutchman."

And the Governor smiled, as did Mr. Vanderdecken, who replied, in his organ tones:

"I cannot pretend to emulate my distinguished ancestor in qualities of sailing into the wind's eye, but I believe I am like him and the Wandering Jew in one thing—I am never at rest. I fear I must disappoint your friends to-night, Governor, for I am about to sail for the port of Batavia, and came to the levee merely to bid your excellency adieu."

The Governor bowed and Mr. Vanderdecken fell back into the crowd, where our consul, Mr. Gilbert, in his forward way, so like a politician, glided up to him, took his hand, and began to talk to him so fast that Mr. Vanderdecken couldn't get in a word edgewise to stop him. And the first thing I knew Mr. Gilbert was introducing Mr. Vanderdecken to grandpa and me, and I found every one staring at us in a way that looked as if they were all envious and didn't know how to hide it.

As for Mr. Vanderdecken, his pale, dark face was like a piece of marble in its coldness, and he only gave us the most frigid of bows in return for the introduction Mr. Gilbert had forced on us so adroitly. I believe, had any other person than our consul been there, we shouldn't have known what to say to Mr. Vanderdecken; but Mr. Gilbert was one of those people who are bound to have what they set out to get.

He had taken a fancy to us, and was determined to get us a passage to Batavia on Mr. Vanderdecken's ship, and so he did all he could to bring us together, in which grandpa assisted him in his shrewd business way.

As for me, something prevented me from even lifting up my eyes to Mr. Vanderdecken till Mr. Gilbert said:

"And here's Miss Bruce, Mr. Vanderdecken, the heroine of that story with which all the town is ringing, the woman who has seen your distinguished ancestor—or is ready to swear she has—out at sea. These good people were passengers in the Spindrift, sir."

Then, for the first time, Mr. Vanderdecken looked interested, for he said, hastily:

"In the Spindrift? Are you not mistaken? She lies in the harbor now."

"Oh, you mean the Aberdeen clipper Spindrift," said Gilbert laughing; "the one that brought in the Teviots from Calcutta. No, no, this is another ship altogether, a true Yankee, Mr. Vanderdecken, and her people have seen the Flying Dutchman, or think they have."

I stole a look up at the strange gentleman and caught his dark eyes bent on mine with such a singular regard that I could not withdraw my own glance. He seemed to stare into my very soul, and I trembled without knowing why, as Mr. Vanderdecken said, in his low deep tones:

"In that case they are persons in whom I

cannot but take a great interest. Are you going to remain here long, monsieur?"

He said this to grandpa who answered him readily.

"We are waiting to find a steamer going to Batavia, sir. My little lassie here, is frightened at the thought of going in a sailing vessel and I fear will have to wait a long time before we are able to go."

"Indeed?" was all Vanderdecken would say.

"Yes, indeed," said grandpa with a shrug.

"It's unco inconvenient to me, sir, for I have business in Batavia that must be done, but I fear that if I go in a sailing ship, Mamie here would die of fear ere she crossed the line. We'll have to wait till a steamer comes along, if one ever comes."

"And you say it is important for you to be in Batavia soon," said Mr. Vanderdecken in a slow thoughtful way.

"Very important, sir. In fact I may say if I don't, it may cost me in the neighborhood of a half million of dollars. If I could find but a friend who had a steamer I'd be willing to charter it for the voyage."

Mr. Vanderdecken looked politely sorry.

"I'm sure I wish I could do anything to assist you in your trouble, sir. If you were alone I would offer you a passage in my yacht; but I am a bachelor, as you know, and I could not present much that would tempt a young lady in my poor habitation."

Grandpa hastened to say:

"Dinna heed it, sir—dinna heed heed it. Mamie's joost a bit bairn, and she and her maid will be satisfied anywhere. I'm unco thankful for your kind offer, sir, and accept it wi' thanks."

And so it was arranged, quick enough to take one's breath away, that we were to go to Batavia in the yacht of a man we'd never seen till that evening, and be on board in half an hour after sunrise.

I don't think we could have arranged it so easily but for Mr. Gilbert, who had more assurance than any man I ever saw, and who kept up such a talking and planning and explaining, as gave no one else any time to talk.

Mr. Vanderdecken at last turned away with a coldly polite bow, as if he could no longer endure him, and left us to our own devices in the crowd at the levee.

Then for the first time I began to think what we were going to do, and to feel frightened, when Mr. Gilbert took us to one side, and said to grandpa:

"Ah, by-the-by, Mr. Bruce, I must tell you one or two things about your new host, to put you on your guard against offending him."

"Gude, sir—gude," said grandpa. "I wadna offend the gentleman that's been sae kind till us."

"Well, then, in the first place, you know he is an Eurasian—that is, a mixed blood of Europe and Asia, and you know these Englishmen class Eurasians much as we do mulattoes, or used to do. They hate and despise them all."

"But the Governor was very civil to him," I said.

"Yes; he has a reason for it—for Mr. Vanderdecken is exceedingly rich, and has lent him money, I hear. But remember that he is very proud of the Dutch part of his lineage, and take care not to speak slightly of the native races, either."

"I'd no think of it under any circumstances, sir," said grandpa, looking shocked.

Then Mr. Gilbert hemmed and hawed a little before he went on to grandpa:

"Another thing—ah—you must not be surprised at anything you see on board the yacht, for in this part of the world men have different notions to what we have in America."

"What d'ye mean, sir?" asked grandpa, looking frightened.

"Oh, nothing wrong, I assure you, but Vanderdecken they tell me, keeps up a good deal of Oriental state on his vessel, and has quite a retinue of slaves of all kinds. That's all. Well, I must leave you now. I'll come and help you off in the morning. Good-night."

And he bustled away, leaving me feeling very uncomfortable. I hardly knew why, while grandpa had turned thoughtful and grumpy all of a sudden.

We were promenading through the crowd in this way, when we suddenly came on Lord and Lady Teviot, who immediately began to talk to us both, and Lady Teviot asked anxiously:

"Is it true, Mr. Bruce, what I hear in gossip, that this Eurasian, Vanderdecken, has offered you a passage to Java on his mysterious ship?"

Grandpa drew up rather stiffly.

"It's true, my leddy, that Maister Vanderdecken has been kind enough to offer us his hospitality."

"And are you going?" asked Lord Teviot, eagerly.

"And why not, my lord?" asked grandpa, still more stiffly. "Why not, why not?"

His lordship seemed to hesitate as if he wanted to speak and could not before me, when I heard the soft, deep tones of Mr. Vanderdecken himself behind us, saying:

"Ah, Monsieur Bruce, I was just looking for you."

And he ran his arm into that of grandpa, with a cold stare at Lord Teviot I could not quite understand—it looked so like a defiance—as he said:

"I wish to say, monsieur, that I will send up some of my lascars to your hotel if you will indicate the hour at which you will be ready. They can bring down your baggage at one trip."

"We have no muckle, sir," said grandpa, simply. "We lost it in the pur Spindrift!"

CHAPTER V.

LORD TEVIOT'S WARNING.

MR. VANDERDECKEN looked at us in a strange way as he repeated:

"The Spindrift? Oh, yes. I've heard there is another Spindrift in the harbor, an Aberdeen clipper, just in from Calcutta. They say she brought Lord Teviot here. Have you seen him?"

"Eh, sir, dinna ye ken his lordship?" asked grandpa, in his innocent way. "Let me do the honors, sir. Lord and Lady Teviot, Mr. Vanderdecken."

I don't know what it was made me tremble so as I looked at these two men, being introduced to each other, but they acted so strangely.

Lord Teviot drew himself up to his full height, (and he was a tall man) while Mr. Vanderdecken eyed him steadily for several seconds before either of them bowed.

When they did, it was with their dark eyes fixed on each other in an intent, watchful way, as if trying to find something in each other, without the shadow of a smile.

I can't describe it better than by saying it was the same look I once saw in a picture of two men fighting a duel with sword—a murderous look.

I glanced at Lady Teviot, and she was as pale as death, her blue eyes glowing with the same light I had seen in them when Vanderdecken was first announced. She, too, bowed, but so slightly it was almost imperceptible.

Then Mr. Vanderdecken smiled (and he had a very sweet smile) as he said, politely:

"I am very happy to see milord. I have heard very much of him in India."

Lord Teviot muttered something under his breath to his wife, and then answered.

"Indeed? Have you been in India? I should hardly think you would go there, with the strong resemblance you bear to a man we have been looking for, for twenty odd years."

Mr. Vanderdecken smiled again, in rather a mocking way, I thought, and replied placidly:

"Oh, yes; I am well known all over the East, and if I have earned the name of the Flying Dutchman, it is not without seeing much of the world. Your ship escaped the typhoon, I see, milord."

"Yes," returned Teviot indifferently. "I believe so. We intended to take the southern passage, by Batavia, but the captain concluded to touch at Calcutta first, where I had some business, and we came here thence."

Mr. Vanderdecken favored him with a singular look.

"You have wonderful luck, milord," he said.

"I generally do, sir. I remember once escaping from death, when one of the greatest villains on the face of the earth thought he had me safe, but I lived to hunt him from India."

Mr. Vanderdecken's dark eyes glowed like red-hot coals, as he answered in his deep, rich tones:

"I have heard of that. And I have heard more, too. We Hollanders have our own ideas of politics, you know; and boast that our empire in the Indies has not cost us a drop of blood, save in self-defense."

Lord Teviot smiled sarcastically:

"Yes, I've heard that your ambassadors used to kiss the floor at the Mikado's feet for the privilege of sending two ships a year. We English opened Yokohama to the world with our guns."

"Nay, nay," interposed grandpa here; "ye forget, sir, ye forget Perry and the Yankees. Ye can run down the Dutchman all ye like, my lord; but I'll no have ye flee at the stars and stripes, ye ken."

And as grandpa was testy, they all smiled and our little party broke up. Mr. Vanderdecken strolling away, while Lord and Lady Teviot conversed in low, eager tones, and then Lord Teviot addressed us.

"Mr. Bruce, you'll pardon the liberty I take; but I would rather telegraph to Calcutta for a steamer at my own expense, than have you go in that accursed vessel. For heaven's sake, sir, don't."

Grandpa was very much amazed.

"My lord," he said seriously. "D'ye ken joost what ye're saying to me, when a gentleman has offered me his hospitality sae freely?"

"I do," said Teviot earnestly. "I tell you, if you once venture on that ship, you will regret it. You don't know these Eurasians. They have all the vices of the Hindoo and English races combined, and when they are rich, like this man, they are sometimes perfect demons of sensuality and selfish tyranny."

I could not help feeling indignant at the way in which he treated this distinguished, handsome Vanderdecken, just because of a difference of race; so I said:

"I think you might have said these things to his face, my lord. You seemed to me as if you had known him at some time or other."

He turned to his wife in an imploring sort of way, and she understood his gesture, for she said:

"Miss Bruce, we have seen him before, or at least a man so like him that they might be the same; though that cannot be, for this one is at least twenty years too young to be the man we mean. He was a Hindoo, and connected with that terrible night that whitened both our heads in youth. Do not trust yourselves in the power of this man, I implore you, Mr. Bruce. Evil will come of it."

"Tut, tut, my leddy," said grandpa, testily, "ye have too many prejudices for me. Maister Vanderdecken is a fair-spoken gentleman, introduced by our ain consul; and he daurna harm us on the high seas, in a place swarming wi' cruisers. I'll troost him, and be unco glad of the chance to prove ye that Eurasians, as ye call them, are nae sae bad as they're painted. I bid ye gude-night, my lord."

And with that grandpa turned away, and took me with him, both of us feeling angry.

I looked back, and saw Lord and Lady Teviot talking earnestly together; but they did not come near us any more, and pretty soon we met Mr. Gilbert, to whom we told what we'd heard.

Our consul laughed in his sarcastic way, saying:

"Oh, well, those Britishers are full of their spites. You know Teviot's name in India, don't you?"

"No; what was it?" I asked curiously.

"They used to call him 'Butcher Teviot' after the mutiny. It is stated that he used to blow a dozen or twenty men from the mouth of the cannon every day he was in the field after the Cawnpore massacre and the siege of Delhi. He's never had a good word for a Hindoo since; and he hates the Eurasians worse still. Vanderdecken's a lion here, and Teviot's nose is out of joint; that's all. Teviot's not rich, and it's gall and wormwood to him and his handsome wife that they can't do as they used to do in the times before the mutiny, when the youngest sub, fresh from England, could make a rajah get off his horse to salute him."

And do they do that?" I asked, hardly believing him.

"Yes, Miss Bruce. You've no conception how the English used to treat the Hindoos, and would still, but for the strong arm of the Home Government. They behave like the old Romans, in their pride and brutality. But as far as Vanderdecken goes, he is beyond their malice. The Dutch Government may not be very warlike, but the English are afraid to touch a Dutchman, for all that. They know that the Hollanders will fight to the last, if once they are fully roused up. You will notice, when you get to Java, how different the Dutch are in their intercourse with the natives. At what hour will you go to the yacht?"

"We'll be ready at daylight," said grandpa.

"Then I'll come and see you off. Pleasant voyage."

And Mr. Gilbert edged off into the crowd, while grandpa became thoughtful and silent again, and finally said to me, as we moved along:

"My bairn, let's go find Mrs. Peters. I want to have a bit talk wi' the Governor, and I'll leave ye wi' her till I come back."

"Yonder she is," said I, for I saw that odious woman a little way off, as usual, not with her husband, but this time with that gawky puppy, Mr. Hyatt, junior, with whom she was flirting, just as hard as she used to do with Doctor Sam.

I do like to show these married flirts they can't have everything their own way; and I was delighted with the opportunity of cutting her out with another man, though one could hardly call that boy a man.

So I helped grandpa get through the crowd and you would have thought, to see the way I greeted Mrs. Peters, she was the dearest friend I had in the world.

She knew what I came for; but put the best face on it, when grandpa asked her to take care of me for a few minutes, and added in his innocent way:

"These bairns canna be trusted alone, Mrs. Peters, without a lady of suitable age and discretion to take care of them. Let the young folks claver together, and see they dinna talk too much nonsense."

"Oh yes," said I, "Mrs. Peters can imagine she's my aunt, and Mr. Hyatt here is a bashful lover that needs to be encouraged. Good-by, grandpa. We won't make any runaway match while Mrs. Peters is watching us."

Then he went off, and I began to be as charming as it was possible to be to young Hyatt, who was only nineteen, and so taken up with his new clothes that he hardly knew what to say except "yes" and "no."

I had really hard work with him, for I had

snubbed him all the voyage, and his cowardly behavior on the raft had disgusted me so I had been positively rude to him. And these boys of nineteen fall in love with married women, older than themselves, much easier than they do with young ladies, while Mrs. Peters had the advantage of having had several hours with him before.

He would talk to her when he wouldn't talk to me; and at first it was discouraging; for Mrs. Peters played every card she knew, and I could see from her eyes that she was exulting in her success.

But when one feels determined to succeed, one is apt to do so; and I had made up my mind to fascinate little Hyatt, just to spite Peters. And I did it at last, so that he began to talk quite freely to me, and tell me all sorts of things, just like the boy he was; while I confess that I used my eyes in a way that I ought not to have done, till the poor boy actually began to talk sweet to me, and Mrs. Peters couldn't stop him.

But it was getting to be a great bore, as soon as I had him safely, and I began to wish grandpa would come back, when Mrs. Peters observed spitefully:

"I think I see your mother beckoning to you, Mr. Cyril."

"Let's go and find her," said I, jumping up; for I really did see the old lady on the other side of the big room, making signals to her son, and I wanted more fun.

I knew that old Mrs. Hyatt thought all the girls were in love with her pet Cyril Adolphus, and that she had been guarding him like a lioness all through the voyage, so I wanted to tease her a little. It was very wicked of me, I know; but I do all sorts of things when I get going and grandpa's not near to stop me.

Mrs. Peters couldn't well object; so I seized Cyril's arm and marched him over to his mother, he looking sulky and ashamed of himself; for he was a regular silly and hated to obey his mother, like all spoiled children.

And I didn't give her time to say a word before I began to talk about what a nice time we'd had, and how sorry I was we were going away in the morning, and I should be sorry all my life I'd not known Cyril Adolphus better, when we were on the Spindrift, for he was such good company and so, so wicked.

And Cyril Adolphus he blushed and giggled, like the born silly he was, and tried to look wicked, while his mother was ready to burst with pride, though she tried to look grave over it.

And in the midst of it all, who should come along but Lord Teviot, who flashed one cold glance over our party and passed on, with an expression I shall never forget.

It seemed to say to me:

"I've wasted my solicitude; you belong to a very vulgar set, young lady. Good-by."

I don't know how it was, but that glance set me to thinking of where I was going next day, and I forgot all about the Hyatts and everything else, till Mrs. Hyatt said:

"Why, what's the matter, Miss Mamie? What's come over you? You look as if you'd seen that ghost again?"

I tried to laugh, but her words struck me.

"Ghost? What ghost, Mrs. Hyatt?"

"Why, the Flying Dutchman to be sure? Hain't you seen him to-night?" she said, in her Ninth Ward way. "I'm sure he looks enough like a ghost to be the real one, though folks say he's only a great-grandson to the old original ghost. Didn't you see the evil eyes of him, and his nasty white-yellow face? He made me sick to see him."

"Whom are you talking off?" said I, pretending I didn't understand, to find out what she thought.

"I mean that pale man with the wicked eyes, that every one is so civil to—that Mr. Vanderdecken. They say he gets all his riches from—you know who—the Old Fellow himself. But I don't want any of his riches or his civility either. I believe if I was to see him close to me of a sudden in the dark I'd be scared to death, Miss Mamie. Ugh! isn't he a wicked-looking wretch?"

"Miss Bruce," here said a soft, deep voice, just at Mrs. Hyatt's elbow, "your grandfather has commissioned me to bring you to him. May I offer my arm?"

I could hardly help bursting out laughing to see Mrs. Hyatt's face as she looked round and saw Mr. Vanderdecken at her very side, with his pale, impassive face and his glittering eyes.

The good woman started to one side as if she had seen a snake, with a shudder and an exclamation, which Mr. Vanderdecken did not notice in the least, and then I took his arm, and left them all staring after us, as if they had seen a ghost.

The only token Mr. Vanderdecken gave of having seen or heard anything was the dry observation to me:

"Your friends are from America, Miss Bruce?"

"Yes," I said; for I didn't know what else to say.

"Are they all like that in America?" he asked again; and the question made me angry.

"Like what?" I asked him.

"No offense, mademoiselle. I mean only so open in their likes and dislikes," he answered, placidly. "The worthy lady in red velvet seemed to be a little afraid of me, from the way she looked at me."

"Oh, that is because she has heard so many ghost stories about you," said I, to cover up her rudeness. "No, no, we are not all like Mrs. Hyatt. She is superstitious?"

"And you, are not you a little superstitious too?" he asked, with his charming smile. "I have a way of reading faces, Miss Bruce, and I think you are a little bit afraid of me."

I found myself already trembling at something, but I tried to hide it and laugh as I answered:

"Indeed no! Why should I be?"

"You are correct," he said, gravely. "You at least have no cause to fear me, whatever may be the case with others. By the by, have you known Lord Teviot very long?"

"No. He was introduced to us first to-night at dinner," I said.

"And has he—pardon the question—said anything to you to prejudice you against me?" asked Mr. Vanderdecken.

I hesitated a moment. Had we been alone, I don't think I should have answered; but there is something in the solitude of a crowded room that enables one to say things one would dread to say elsewhere, so I answered:

"Yes. He implored us not to go on your ship, and told us you were a monster of wickedness."

He smiled slightly.

"He said that, did he? This pure Lord Teviot! Well, well, time will show. I shall say nothing against him. He is, I have heard, a distinguished soldier. Ah, here is your grandfather with his excellency."

But we could not get to them for the crowd, and, while we were waiting, Mr. Vanderdecken continued, in a low, confidential tone:

"Tell me, have the Teviots made you think me a very bad man, Miss Bruce?"

I couldn't help looking up, and found those splendid dark eyes bent on mine with a wistful look that seemed as if it set me at my ease at once, so I said:

"No, Mr. Vanderdecken, nothing but your own actions can make me think you that. Grandpa and I are not the people to listen to every tale of gossip we hear, and believe it."

"You are right," he said, earnestly. "There are two sides to every tale, and the misfortune is that, in race conflicts, only one side is heard by either party. You will not fear to embark on board my vessel?"

"Not with grandpa," said I.

And then we got through the crowd, and Vanderdecken gave me up to grandpa, who took me away from the ball almost immediately after, and told me what he had been doing on the way home.

"The Governor tells me that Maister Vanderdecken is a most respectable person, Mamie; for I confess the stories of yonder lording frightened me not a little, and I desired to find out all I could about him. He's the son of a great Dutch planter in Java and Sumatra, who was distinguished, twenty years ago, for being the only man in the East Indies that dared lift up his voice in favor of the poor Hindoos, after the Sepoy mutiny. Ye ken, Mamie? no, ye dinna ken, but I'll tell ye. In those days 'twas the fashion to call the Hindoos demons in human shape, because they broke out in their blind, ignorant way, as the Irish and the French and other poor oppressed folk have broken out at times, and will to the end of the world. And Maister Vanderdecken was the one man that daured tell them sae, in their triumph and revenge. And the Governor tells me he saved more than one proscribed rajah, who fled to him, and carried him off to Java, refusing to give him up, and that's one of the reasons Lord Teviot hates him sae sair."

"But how is it that the Governor doesn't share the hatred, grandpa?"

"I dinna ken, lassie. I'm tauld Singapore's no like Calcutta, and prejudice is nae sae strang here. And the Governor's no a Scot nor Briton, but joost an Irishman, and not long out here. Anyway, he's tauld me we can troost to Maister Vanderdecken for a generous host, and as rich as mony a king—if not richer. His father was weel enough, but they say the son's mair than twice as rich since the mutiny. Some think he's like the Rothschilds in Europe, and that he has had control of the treasures of money of the rajahs that fled to him. I dinna ken muckle of that. Come, lassie; here's the hotel. Let's get a bit o' sleep, and tell Inez to pack up for the morning."

But of course we didn't get very much sleep that night till after we had packed up everything, for it is not to be supposed I was going to have my packing to be done in a hurry, and our rooms were full of boxes that we'd got since we came to Singapore.

At six, next morning, the Malay waiter told us:

"Vanderdecken sahib's coolies come take sahib's boxes to shipper."

And we went aboard, after settling our bills.

CHAPTER VI.

MR. VANDERDECKEN AT SEA.

I DON'T hardly know how to describe Mr. Vanderdecken's yacht, for, as I have said before, I'm no sailor, and hate sailors' talk. I don't know how she was rigged, except that it was like the Spindrift. They called her a steamer, but I couldn't see any chimney or smoke about her, and she left the harbor under sail.

But one thing I can say, that I never saw such a lovely ship inside. Her decks were so white and clean one could have eaten dinner off the bare boards, and everything else was finished off with beautiful dark polished woods and silver railings, like one of the pretty little yachts we see at home.

And such a crew I never saw before. Not a white man among them. They were all dark men, with glowing black eyes and splendid dresses, with shawl turbans and sashes full of daggers with gold handles, and they were all bare-footed and bare-armed, with gold bracelets and anklets, while all had ear-rings in their ears.

Their dark faces frightened me at first, but they were so silent and respectful I got over that, and besides, I was used to dark people from having Inez for my maid so long.

Mr. Vanderdecken received us on board, dressed in a sort of uniform, half Oriental, and very splendid. He looked much handsomer than he had in plain black, and more like my ideal of a pirate chief, for I couldn't help thinking of him as a pirate after all I'd seen and heard of him.

The ship moved slowly out of the harbor, and I noticed that every ship we passed had her side lined with people staring at us.

There were two British men-of-war lying outside, and we could see the brass buttons of the officers in groups, all of them staring at us through telescopes.

One ship lay close to where we passed, and I noticed a red-faced officer, particularly earnest in his gaze, till we came so close that he put his telescope down.

He looked the sort of man who is used to being obeyed, and as we glided by he called out:

"Ship ahoy! Where are you bound?"

Mr. Vanderdecken looked up at him, and made no answer beyond pointing up to the tri-colored flag that floated above us, which seemed to make the officer very angry, for he called out some bad language at once.

Mr. Vanderdecken instantly stepped out in full view, and called back:

"Monsieur, I have ladies on board. You will please moderate your language, or I shall be obliged to hold you responsible."

The red-faced officer seemed to be so much taken aback at this, that he actually could not find words to speak; and Mr. Vanderdecken shook his finger at him, with the parting salute:

"I know your whole race, monsieur, and defy them all. I go to Batavia, and if you dare follow, I will promise you something you never had before."

"And what is that?" called out the English officer.

"A lesson in manners," said Mr. Vanderdecken, coldly. "My name is Vanderdecken, monsieur."

And then the breeze carried us so far that we could not catch the answer, though the Englishman seemed to be more angry than ever, for we could hear his hoarse tones shouting.

And then, as we looked, we saw a number of dark figures go climbing up the ropes, and Mr. Vanderdecken said to grandpa, in his placid way:

"The gentleman is angry. On my word, he is going to chase us. Let us go down to the cabin, where our breakfast awaits us. When we come up again, you shall see how the Phantom can beat them all."

He turned round and said something to his dark men in a strange language that I knew must be Malay, having heard it so often in Singapore.

They all made him a low obeisance in perfect silence, and he led us to the cabin-door.

The last thing I saw of the English man-of-war the white sails were dropping down from her yards, and a cloud of thick, black smoke coming from her chimney, while our helmsman was turning the wheel, and a very tall, thin Malay, in gorgeous dress, was coming on the quarter-deck, as if he was going to take command.

I don't know what it was that struck me in his figure, but it seemed somehow as if I'd seen it before, though a moment's reflection convinced me that was not possible. Still, I managed to catch a good glimpse of him as I went down into the cabin, and saw that he was very tall, very thin and wiry in his figure, and that he had bushy black hair and a little black mustache. I had never seen him before.

Then I went down into the cabin, and there, I must say, I was not only amazed but enchanted.

I don't know much about ships; but cabins are different. I fell in love with this one; for

such a cabin I never saw in all my life in the prettiest yacht.

It was nearly as large as the saloon of the Spindrift, and had state-rooms round it like that; but the partitions were all made of cane-work, so as to let the air in everywhere.

And the cane was covered with gold, and the loveliest kind of japanned lacquer work, so that the whole cabin looked like a fairy palace, so light and cool and flimsy was it.

The curtains, cushions, carpet, everything was silk, and gold, in heavy, stiff brocades, that any lady might have given thirty dollars a yard for, to make into a court-dress.

Silk seemed to be as common as cotton in this wonderfully beautiful cabin, and, for all that we were close to the equator, the air down there was cool and perfumy as early spring at home.

There was very little furniture; nothing but piles of cushions on the brocade rugs, scattered here and there, while the floor and fittings were all in satinwood, and some spicy kind that smelled like sandalwood.

In the middle of the floor was spread a low table, with cushions all round it, and Mr. Vanderdecken said to grandpa:

"You will not mind eating in our Malay style, monsieur? You know I am a half-blood, and we abominate the stiff, angular chairs of Europe. If you prefer it, however, you shall have one, and a high table."

Grandpa looked a little puzzled as he said:

"Ye'll not take it ill, sir, if I say I'm getting auld and stiff, and I'm frightened that I canna get up frae the flure if I once git doon there."

Mr. Vanderdecken smiled:

"Nay, then, we will treat you in our Malay fashion to aged princes, give you two bearers to raise you and let you down. I am sure you will like it as a novelty, and we will try it, if you wish."

"Whatever ye like, Maister Vanderdecken," said grandpa resignedly. "I'm in yer hands, sir."

Then this singular man clapped his hands, and into the room tripped eight or ten young Malay girls, as graceful as fawns, with great liquid dark eyes.

They were all attired in the same Malay style, with bare feet, bangles, ear and nose rings, and a sort of crape scarf crossed over their bosoms as their only dress, except a *sarong*, as they call it, something between a shawl and a petticoat, used as a skirt.

Mr. Vanderdecken said something in Malay, and they took hold of grandpa as if he had been a baby and let him softly down on a cushion; then did the same office for me and our host, as if they were used to it.

It was the perfection of Eastern luxury. One didn't even have to sit down to table.

Poor Inez stood blushing and confused at one side. She didn't know what to do exactly. She couldn't talk Malay, and when they came to put her down to table she began to stammer out in Spanish that she was only the maid.

I looked at grandpa, who said:

"Let the lassie gang wi' the rest. Maister Vanderdecken, what'll we do wi' my daughter's maid, sir?"

Mr. Vanderdecken said something in Malay, and two of the girls beckoned Inez to follow them into some of the mysterious realms of the ship, where we saw no more of her till after breakfast. It was a most delicious meal; for there in that climate one has all sorts of fruits to be found nowhere else, and the table of the Phantom seemed to be supplied with everything.

Mr. Vanderdecken was the most courteous of hosts and I was charmed with his demeanor, so gentle, so different from what Lord Teviot had hinted.

Of course I had understood something of what he had meant to convey, and I confess that I watched him very closely and jealously, as did grandpa, with all his politeness. But a prince could not have been more respectful and dignified, and I began to wonder what the Teviots could have been thinking of, when, all of a sudden came a loud boom over the sea, that made grandpa and me jump so that I dropped my cup.

"Eh, sirs," said grandpa, "what's that?"

"It is a gun," said Mr. Vanderdecken, quietly. "Don't be alarmed. It is probably the Cyclops signaling."

"The Cyclops?" echoed I. "Isn't that an iron-clad? I heard them call her so at the palace."

Mr. Vanderdecken smiled.

"Yes. She's an iron-clad. It is the ship we passed, with the hot-tempered captain. Being an iron-clad, I will defy her to catch us on the way to Batavia."

We heard a shuffling on deck, as if the Malays were running about with bare feet, and the voice of some one shouting something in Malay.

"Eh, sirs," exclaimed grandpa, suddenly, "what's that voice? I've heard it before, I'm sure."

"Hardly," said Mr. Vanderdecken, coldly.

"That is my first officer, Mr. Hassim. I shipped him in the last voyage."

"I crave pardon," said grandpa. "'Tis but a

trick of voice, I suppose. 'Tis a curious thing how men's voices will resemble each other."

"And does Mr. Hassim's voice remind you of any that you have heard before?" asked our host.

Grandpa shook his head.

"I canna tell, sir. I'm growing auld and my memory fails me belike. I'll ha'e to hear it mair than once to be able to say."

Hardly had he spoken when we heard another gun, followed very soon after by a sound like the puff of an express train, past the cabin windows.

Mr. Vanderdecken's eyes flashed, but he said nothing for a moment, and presently we felt a tremulous motion in the ship, which I recognized.

"Why, have you a steam-engine?" I asked. "I saw no signs of this being a steamer."

Mr. Vanderdecken bowed his head in an absent way, as if thinking of something else, and answered:

"We have an auxiliary engine. Will you pardon me if I go on deck for a few moments? I wish to give some orders to my men."

"Certainly, certainly," said grandpa hastily. "I sincerely trust there's nae danger, sir."

"Danger!" echoed Vanderdecken, with a singular, mournful smile. "And if there is, sir, be sure it shall not come near you. No, there is no real danger to any but me. I will beg you, Mr. Bruce, while I am on deck, to explore the inmost recesses of my ship. All is open to you. You will be able to see for yourself whether I am the depraved sensualist represented to you. I will rejoin you later."

He rose from his cushion and went on deck, where I soon heard his voice calling out some orders in the Malay language, while the shuffling of bare feet grew more and more rapid.

Grandpa and I tried to go on with our breakfast, but it was of no use. We felt too uneasy.

Grandpa beckoned to the girls, who had been standing behind with fans and fly-flaps to keep us cool, and they instantly came and lifted us up, as if they were used to the work.

As if both thinking of the same thing, we went to the stern of the ship, where we knew there must be windows, and found the sun shining brightly on the tops of innumerable little waves, while in full sight from the window we saw the tall white pyramid of sail of a ship coming after us, but a long way off.

Behind this ship again were a number of little brown sails, that we knew to belong to the native vessels, and the low dark line of the shore was growing bluer and more distant all the time.

And just as we looked, I saw a big white cloud go up round the ship, with a red flash in the middle of it, and grandpa caught me up in his arms, saying:

"Eh, God save ye, my bairn, they're firing at us!"

"Firing at us?" I echoed stupidly. "But what for? We have done nothing."

He made no answer, for just at that moment we heard the deep, distant boom of the gun, and saw a line of white spray coming toward us, as if something were skipping over the waves.

"Eh! 'tis a cannon-shot! God save my pair bairn. We'll all be killit," groaned grandpa, clutching me close.

But, somehow, I didn't feel so much afraid, for I have very good eyes, and I saw that, whatever it was, the thing was not going to hit us at all, but going off to one side.

And it didn't hit us, either, for presently I saw a great white cloud of spray, as if a big rock had tumbled into the sea, and I said to grandpa:

"See, it has sunk, and it hasn't reached us."

Hardly had I spoken, when another white cloud came from the ship, and, now I knew what it was, I waited and traced the path of the shot, for all the world as if I had been an old sailor or soldier.

It came toward us just as straight as could be, this time, and I began to tremble and shrink, though I'd never seen such a thing before, till all of a sudden came the white burst of spray, and I knew it had sunk, not more than half a block away, right under our cabin windows.

Then I heard a loud yell on deck, as if the people there were rejoicing, too, and almost immediately after came the hissing sound of a sky-rocket, as it seemed to me, though I never heard of a sky-rocket being let off in the daytime.

I saw something like a little black stick go shooting through the air toward the ship, and then came a loud report, and a tremendous cloud of black and blue smoke appeared in the air, taking to itself a regular form, exactly like a huge dragon, and completely hiding the strange ship as it brooded over the sea.

The smoke seemed so thick and greasy that the wind had very little effect on it for nearly half a minute, and then it began to melt away and come driving after us on the wind, completely hiding ship and shore, till it slowly faded, but not for at least three or four minutes.

And when at last it became thin enough to see through, the ship was ever so much further off than before, and grandpa said:

"Eh, lassie, but et's God's mercy has saved us. I think she's out of gunshot."

"And what was that smoke?" I asked.

Grandpa shook his head.

"Eh, lassie, 'tis a fearsome thing. I'm nae sae sure but there's something uncanny about this ship, after all. Ye mind the awful black smoke, and the shape of the evil beast of darkness. Lassie, I wish we had ne'er come aboard."

But I could not feel the way he did, for it seemed to me we had nothing more to fear now from the ship.

Certainly she had stopped firing, and grew more and more distant every moment we looked at her.

So I said to grandpa:

"Don't you remember what Mr. Denyse said?"

"Densye? what Densye?" said he testily.

"Mr. Denyse, mate of the Spindrift—oh, no, you weren't there when he told me. It was at the hotel when he came to say good-by to me."

"And what did he say, lassie?"

"He told me that the Japanese and Chinese of these seas had so much hocus-pocus, that they could frighten almost anybody. That smoke must be something of the sort, grandpa."

"Maybe it is, lassie. I'm no saying no."

"Then what's the use of being frightened if it's on our side? Come and let's do what Mr. Vanderdecken told us we might do: explore the ship."

So we set out to look over the state-rooms and found them as beautiful as all else. The very sheets on the beds were made of fine white silk, that seemed to be able to be washed and meant for it too. It wasn't shining like a dress silk at all, but I knew it was real China silk, from the feel of it. And all the furniture was in the same quaint Chinese and Japanese style I'd seen in pictures, with gold or heavy gilding on everything, and such china as our people at home would go crazy over.

I didn't think much of the ugly bronze and gold dragons and hideous images that I saw, but I've no doubt they cost a good deal of money.

And when we got through the main cabin I called for Inez and she came to me so transformed that I didn't know her at first.

They had made a regular Malay of her, with a costly brocade *sarong* and a China crape scarf, and bangles and ear-rings, and all the rest of it, till one couldn't have told her from the rest, only she had larger eyes, longer lashed, and her hair was finer in texture. She smiled and looked bashful, when I said:

"Why, Inez, who fixed you up so?"

"Surya did it," she told me.

"And who is Surya?"

"One of these *muchachas, mi senorita*. She have been bring up at Luzon, in de Philippine Island, and she talk Spanish," said Inez.

Then I told her to lead me on, and show me all there was to be seen in the ship, and we went on a regular exploring trip, with the pretty Malay girls, till we forgot which was mistress and which maid, and I found myself learning Malay words for everything I saw in the ship.

I can't begin to describe all I saw on that wonderful ship. It seemed to me as if Mr. Vanderdecken tried how much money he could put on everything, no matter where it was.

Even the very kitchen had silver saucepans and stewpans, and the girls told me, as well as they could, that it saved them so much trouble in keeping clean, that they would not use anything else.

They showed me the store-rooms, down in what the sailors in the Spindrift called the "hold"; and a dark, dismal place it was in the Spindrift. Captain Hutton took me there once for fun, and I was frightened out of my life at the great enormous rats (as big as dogs, I was going to say, but I won't), and the darkness and close, stuffy heat, and the cobwebs and cockroaches. But the store-room of the Phantom was quite light, though there wasn't a window anywhere; and I couldn't tell where the light came from. It seemed to glow out of the walls, floor, ceiling, everywhere, as soon as we shut the door, so we could see each other plainly and count the nails in the boards. It rather frightened me, this mysterious light, and I got out into the real daylight as soon as I could, and back to the cabin, when I began to get tired of life below stairs, and asked grandpa if I mightn't go on deck, as he seemed to be tired.

He told me to take Inez with me, and not to be too free in my manner.

"For, lassie," said he, "ye dinna ken what harm may lurk in this smooth-spoken man, and I dinna like her majesty's ships firing at him."

Grandpa was a good American, who had come to the United States as a child, but I noticed that, as he grew older, he seemed to come back to old prejudices in a way that sometimes amused me, it was so innocent.

"I suppose you think *her majesty's ships* never make a mistake," said I, a little spitefully. "I suppose that red-faced captain got mad because Mr. Vanderdecken sauced him back. I don't believe Vanderdecken's such a wretch."

And I went up on deck, leaving grandpa shaking his head and thinking me, I suppose, a very pert girl—as I confess I was!

But I soon forgot everything else in the lovely view before me on deck.

The ship was just piled with snowy white sails, that swelled in the breeze like wings; and the pretty tricolor flag fluttered up above us against the sails, making a splendid patch of color.

Those picturesque sailors were grouped about on the deck, at different tasks, coiling away ropes into little round coils, as regular as a spool of cotton, or polishing at the silver work; while a dark Hindoo, in a huge white turban, stood at the wheel to guide the ship, and Mr. Vanderdecken, with his tall Malay officer, was at the very stern of the ship, watching two little specks (all that was left of the pursuing ships) through telescopes.

I looked all round and could see that we were not by any means out of sight of land, and I wondered where we were.

I went softly up behind Mr. Vanderdecken, thinking to surprise him; but that odious Hindoo, with his rolling eyes, made a sort of a grunt in some language, and Mr. Vanderdecken and the Malay officer turned round with a start.

Mr. Vanderdecken looked amused at my coming up without grandpa, for he said:

"You flatter me greatly, Miss Bruce. Well, have you found out any skeletons yet in this terrible ship?"

"No," I said, laughing, "but I saw a most terrible black dragon in the sky, and I began to think you must have dealings with people down-stairs."

"Oh, you mean the smoke dragon," he said, lightly. "That is nothing. Have you never heard of Japanese day fire-works? They are common enough here."

"Day fire-works?" echoed I. "No. What are they?"

"You've seen one of them," he answered. "I sent it off in a rocket, to make a smoke that would hide my vessel till it got out of gunshot. The captain of the Cyclops thought to make me heave to by firing at me, and he has some very big guns. But the best guns in the world cannot hit an object unless the gunners can see it, and my dragon confused him just long enough to enable me to run out of distance. Would you like to see some more of those fire-works?"

"I'm sure I should be delighted," I said; "but please don't have any more dragons; they frighten grandpa."

He smiled, and said something to Mr. Hassim, whom I had a good look at now, and couldn't help thinking I'd seen him somewhere before, but couldn't tell where. Mr. Hassim made a funny sort of bow, with both hands up at his forehead, and went away.

"I'll send up a comic balloon," said Mr. Vanderdecken. "Those Englishmen shall see what I think of them."

And very soon the sailors brought out a brass cannon, like a big coal-scuttle, and put in some powder and a great red ball that looked as if it was made of pasteboard. And they fired it up in the air and it burst with a loud noise, and, to my amazement, out jumped a great, enormous, huge figure of John Bull, just like a comic picture, and went sailing round in the air, with a dog hanging to his coat-tails, all swelled out and shaking.

I could see it was only a paper balloon, but it looked so comical I couldn't help laughing, for I knew grandpa would lose all his superstition if he once saw that figure, which blew up while we looked at it and vanished.

CHAPTER VII.

CALLING THE SPIRITS.

AFTER the bursting of that funny figure, we sailed on without any further adventures all the morning; and I began to see how it was that the yacht had no appearance of a steamer about her while yet I knew from her tremulous motion that there must be an engine working on board.

Mr. Vanderdecken showed me that one of his masts was hollow and made of steel, while out of the top of it came a little smoke, not thick and black, but pale and yellow, like what comes from our New York chimneys where we burn hard coal.

He told me he had only a small engine, which used up very little fuel, so that he could keep at sea a long time, without having to take in coal.

"And do you stay out at sea a very long time?" I asked.

"Yes," he said gravely. "I have to. When a man has many enemies, he has to fight or fly as necessity guides."

"And have you many enemies?" I asked again.

"I have," he answered, still more gravely. "They are all of one race, and our warfare will never end."

Then he pulled himself up, as if he had said too much, and left me thinking over what he could mean.

I saw that his enemies must be English, but when I remembered what a favorite he was at Singapore, I could not quite understand it.

I thought I would ask grandpa, when we were alone, but he only shook his head crossly and told me:

"Ye speer too many questions, lassie. There are things a lassie shouldn't ken. I'll be glad when we're at Batavia, for ye get too free in manner."

So I had to be content with thinking over what I couldn't say, and the evening found us all out at sea, with no sight of land anywhere.

Mr. Vanderdecken left us alone in the cabin, with a delicacy I shall never forget. He seemed to feel that grandpa distrusted him, and actually slept on deck that night, as I found next morning when Inez told me about it.

Next day there were quite a number of sails in sight, most of them little Malay vessels, so funny, with their brown mats and double canoes, but there were a few of our own kind, and we came up with one of these about noon.

I saw the dear old stars and stripes on her, and my heart warmed to them, for there was only one American ship at Singapore when we were there, and she had gone away with Mr. Denyse in her.

It struck me this might be the same vessel, so I asked Mr. Vanderdecken if he couldn't read the name of the ship as we came up with her.

"Why, certainly—with pleasure," he said, and he leveled his glass and read out:

"George Washington, Boston." It needs no more to tell us the nationality of that ship, Miss Bruce.

"Yes," I said; "and I think there are some people on board that I know."

"Who, lassie?" asked grandpa, who was beside me.

"Why, there's Doctor Sam, you know. He went on the Washington, and Mr. Denyse is something or other in her, grandpa. We shall get to Batavia before them."

Grandpa looked at the ship wistfully. She seemed to be very slow, and made a great fuss in the water, without going very fast.

"She's a stout ship," he said. "Doctor Sam did ye say, lassie? Maybe Maister Vanderdecken wadna object to speaking her."

Mr. Vanderdecken had been standing by us as we talked together; but when I turned to look for him he had gone off, silent as a spirit, and I saw him forward among the men, talking to his officer, Mr. Hassim, and paying no attention to the passing ship.

"I suppose he's busy," said I. "I'm sorry. I wish I knew if they are on board."

But Mr. Vanderdecken did not come near us, and very soon we passed by the Washington, as she went plunging and foaming along like a cart-horse.

I saw Mr. Hassim hold out a big black board at the side of the ship, and then I saw Mr. Denyse get up on the rail of the Washington and show another black board, with some chalk figures on it; and grandpa said, with a sigh:

"Tis only the latitude figures, lassie. They won't talk one mair. There's too many ships about to make it a preevelege."

But just at that minute, as if to contradict him, I saw a great yellow-bearded sailor jump up in the rigging of the Washington, and heard him roar out like thunder:

"Ship ahoy! Where from?"

I knew the man in a moment. It was one of those great, big, yellow-haired giants of Danes, who had helped save us on the raft.

I saw Mr. Vanderdecken look at Mr. Hassim, but neither of them answered, and then I heard Mr. Denyse call out angrily:

"You, Nelson, how dare you hail a ship, sir? Get down, and let me attend to my business."

But Nelson only roared louder:

"Ship ahoy! Where from?"

And then there was a confusion on board the other ship, and I saw the other Dane who had been with us jump up into the rigging by his friend and begin to curse and swear at the people inside.

"Why don't we tell them what they want to know?" said I to grandpa. "The poor fellows are curious."

"It's no discipline, lassie," said he. "They're only just common sailors, ye ken, and ha'e nae business to be over-curious."

But the noise in the other ship grew louder as we passed them, and the two Danes, who seemed to be intoxicated, all of a sudden jumped into the sea and came swimming toward us like water-dogs.

I saw Mr. Vanderdecken shrug his shoulders and walk away from Hassim, and then the Malay called out to our men, who threw ropes over the side and let them drag, so the Danes might catch them and come on board.

But that was all they did, for our vessel went on as if nothing had happened, and we soon left the Washington behind.

"Eh, sirs," said grandpa, amazed, "heard ye e'er of sic a thing as stealin' able seamen in broad daylight out of another ship? Nae wonder the mon has enemies."

And when I looked over the side, there were the two wild Danes, who had caught hold of the ropes and pulled themselves up close to the ship, but could get no further, we were going so fast.

I never saw such crazy fellows. They were in the sea, and didn't seem to mind it a bit. They had given each one his rope a twist round his body, so as to relieve his arms, and there they were, dragging along, sometimes above,

sometimes under water, as quietly as if lying in bed. I was frightened, and began to cry out: "Oh, they'll be drowned! they'll be drowned! Please pull them on board."

And then I heard Mr. Vanderdecken give some order in Malay, which Mr. Hassim repeated, and the dark sailors pulled the two Danes on board.

But what surprised me was the way they treated them. Instead of giving the poor fellows dry clothes, if they didn't just tie their hands and feet as if they'd done something wicked, and then Mr. Hassim told his men to take them down-stairs somewhere, and down they went, struggling and kicking, but tied so firmly that they couldn't resist.

At first they roared out all sorts of terrible words, but that stopped all of a sudden when Mr. Hassim gave some order. I saw some men pull off their turbans and tie them over the Danes' mouths, and then they were quiet.

Mr. Vanderdecken never came near us all the rest of the morning, but shut himself up in some place down-stairs, and Mr. Hassim came and paced the quarter-deck as if we weren't there, never offering to notice us; while the ship sailed on faster than ever.

It was very singular, and I could not account for it all. What had the poor men done to be treated so? Grandpa wouldn't say anything but:

"Haud your claver, lassie; 'tis nae concern of ours. I'll be glad when we're in Batavia."

At last I plucked up courage, when grandpa was in the cabin, and I waited till Mr. Hassim passed near me, when I said:

"Please, Mr. Hassim—"

He passed on as if he hadn't heard me, and took the other side of the deck.

But that wasn't the way to get rid of me. It only made me mad. I went boldly after him, laid my hand on his sleeve, and said:

"Mr. Hassim, I want to speak to you. Why did you punish and tie up those poor men?"

He turned his eyes down on me, just like the eyes of a great cat, and said something in Malay.

"Don't you understand me?" I asked.

He jabbered again, the same language.

"Don't you speak English?" I persisted.

Then he shook his head and gave a sort of scowl at me that made him look more like a cat than ever, as he said something about:

"Ingli! Ingli!"

It was just as if he was cursing the English, and I understood his face as well as if he had spoken in my own tongue.

And he looked so horrid that I dropped his sleeve as if it had been red-hot, and hurried away to the cabin stairway to go to grandpa.

And when I got there I couldn't help taking a last glimpse, when I caught a queer look on the Malay's face as if he had been laughing at me.

It changed instantly to a scowl worse than before; (for this time he looked like a perfect demon,) and I dived down into the cabin in a hurry, where I almost ran into Mr. Vanderdecken's arms, as he was coming up from talking with grandpa.

I was so frightened and angry that I burst out:

"Oh, Mr. Vanderdecken, that dreadful Malay! I'm sure he'll murder me some day."

"What Malay?" he asked, with a start and a glare of his eye I shall never forget. "Has any of my crew dared to insult you?"

And he looked worse for a moment than Hassim. I began to understand what they meant by calling him a demon. I had to turn away my eyes, and I trembled all over as I stammered:

"No, no, only—only, Mr. Hassim—"

His face cleared instantly.

"Oh, Hassim. Is that all? He wouldn't hurt a fly. What has he done to you, Miss Bruce?"

"Nothing," said I, "only—only—I asked him a little question, and he scowled at me like a demon."

"And what question did you ask him, Miss Bruce?" said he, quietly.

"I asked him why you punished those two poor fellows who swam to our ship."

"Miss Bruce," said Vanderdecken gravely, "when you want to ask questions, ask me. My Malays don't talk English. Hassim is an honest fellow, but he can't say a word except Dutch and Malay."

"But you were away and I couldn't ask you," said I, pouting. "You didn't seem to want to be spoken to."

He smiled in his sweetest way.

"I was busy," he said. "I'll tell you why I tied up those men. They were deserters from the other ship."

"Then why didn't you give them back?" said I, perty, for I'd got so I didn't fear him any more, and I saw grandpa close beside me.

Mr. Vanderdecken bit his lip as he said:

"You are a regular lady lawyer at cross-questioning. I had no time. I am in a hurry to land you in Batavia. Moreover, I had other reasons, about which I do not wish you to question me, young lady."

He ended in a tone just like Madame Leroux, my old French teacher, when she was telling

me I must do such and such a lesson, and I was so much astonished at it in him, that I flushed up and turned away, ready to cry with mortification, to be treated like a baby all of a sudden.

Mr. Vanderdecken went up on deck, and I heard him talking to Hassim in Malay, while both of them laughed.

And I was sure they were laughing at me.

I declare, I felt so mortified that I stamped my foot with anger, and went off to my stateroom, where I cried half the afternoon.

Grandpa left me entirely alone, and I couldn't help thinking that he rather sympathized with the snubbing I had received, for when I came on deck in the evening I found him actually sitting in a great cane chair, smoking a horrid cigar that he called a cheroot, and talking to Mr. Vanderdecken as if he had known him all his life.

They didn't take any notice of me, but went on talking, and I heard grandpa say:

"Yes, sir, I'll own that I do believe in ghaists. I saw a spirit ship, not three weeks syne, and she was all fiery, and sailed against the wind, and vanished in a puff of smoke. And I'll no deny, sir, that I've heard stories about yersel', for having consort wi' the powers of the air."

"That is part of my privilege of lineage," said Mr. Vanderdecken quietly. "You know my ancestor is still able to visit the earth in visible form, and I doubt not that you saw him. I have seen him myself."

"Ye have seen him yersel', ye say?" asked grandpa, dropping his jaw. "Eh, sirs, but a ghaist seer is no canny for ither folk."

"I have both seen him, and I can call him to me at my will," pursued Vanderdecken. "It grows dusk now, sir; and if you like, I will call up the Flying Dutchman this very night."

Grandpa jumped up like a boy of eighteen, crying:

"Eh, sirs, are ye daft, clean daft? What for wad I call him up, that's brocht naething but misery to us all, and stolen from me my ain kinsman, the only mon left to stay the house of Bruce? Eh, sirs, dinna think of it. Wad ye drive me daft, mysel'?"

He was so much agitated that Mr. Vanderdecken got up and had much difficulty in soothing him, while I confess I was nearly as much frightened myself at the idea of calling up that fearful fiery Phantom that had brought us so much misery.

When we had got grandpa quieted down, our host said, more tenderly than ever I heard him speak:

"You say you lost a kinsman by the fiery ship? Are you quite sure he is dead, Miss Bruce?"

"How can he be anything else?" said I mournfully. "I know if Mungo were alive he would come to find me out, no matter where I was."

"But what has he to do with the Ghost Ship, I mean?" pursued my host. "I don't understand that."

Then I told him, as well as I could, all our story of trial and suffering, and how the loss of Mungo was followed by the coming of the beautiful white albatross and our rescue.

And when I had finished, he said:

"If your cousin be really dead, or carried off by my ancestor, so that his spirit alone lives, I can call him up to you this evening, as soon as it is dark."

I felt a cold shudder run through my very bones.

"You can call Mungo Johnston up?" I faltered.

"I can, if your conjecture be correct, and he be one of the crew of the Flying Dutchman," said he calmly. "You see yonder dark cloud. Say the word, and you shall see him there. If I cannot call him, then he is not dead, and I have only the power to call spirits."

"God guide us, sir," ejaculated grandpa, "do ye tell us op'ly ye're a sorcerer?"

Our host smiled in a strange, mysterious way, as he pointed to the black cloud he had mentioned.

It was growing dark very fast now, and there was no moon, as there had been during our shipwreck. The face of the sky was covered with clouds, and I saw that it was going to be pitch dark.

In one place, behind the vessel, was a dense black cloud, that looked as if it was bringing another storm.

"Look," said Mr. Vanderdecken; and the light of the lamp in the binnacle shone on his face, which was as pale as death. "Yonder comes a cloud big with rain, for we are near the equator; but it will not smite us. Within that cloud lurk the spirits of the dead. Shall I call them forth for you?"

Grandpa said nothing; but I couldn't believe anything of the sort; and I remembered what Mr. Denyse had told me; so I answered boldly:

"Nonsense, Mr. Vanderdecken, you can't call up the dead. No one can."

"You think not?" he said. "Tell me whom you wish to see, and he shall come."

I couldn't help trembling but I choked down the feeling and answered:

"Let me see your ancestor then. Not his

ship: I don't mean that. But let me see your own ancestor, that they call the Flying Dutchman, in his own person."

Mr. Vanderdecken said something in Malay in a loud tone, as if talking to the cloud, and in another moment, as it seemed to me, the binnacle lamp went out. Darkness fell down upon us, and right in the middle of the black cloud, on a sudden, started out an awful HEAD, with its fiery eyes fixed on us menacingly, while the deep murmur of thunder rolled under it. Grandpa uttered a faint groan and fell back in his chair, I screamed out and hid my face in his breast, and Vanderdecken remained standing by us, pointing upward.

I did not dare to look round. That one glimpse seemed to have burned itself into my brain, and I could not banish it.

I heard Vanderdecken's voice:

"Look up. It is gone. Fear nothing, but beware of daring my powers."

"Look up, lassie," muttered grandpa. "'Tis gane. Eh, sirs, when'll we be in Batavia?"

I ventured to look up, and the awful HEAD had gone.

Grandpa's forehead dripped with sweat, and his face looked haggard; but Vanderdecken was as pale and calm as ever.

And the binnacle lamp, which had gone out a moment before, showed us all again as plain as ever.

I couldn't help trembling like a leaf as I looked at Vanderdecken. I had not noticed it before, but he had been gradually changing his dress since he had been at sea, and now he had adopted the full Malay dress, which suited his dark face and glaring eyes perfectly.

He kept those eyes fixed on us both, as he said, in his deep, rich voice:

"You have seen that I can call the father of all evil from his home in the tempest. Now tell me who else you would like to see."

"Oh, sir, spare us," faltered grandpa brokenly. "I'm an auld man, and canna stand muckle, sir. Dinna show us any mair, for the love of God, sir."

He waved his hand indifferently.

"As you please. Good-night."

And he vanished from before us so suddenly that I thought he must have dropped through the deck, while grandpa and I clung together and wished that we were safe on shore again.

I know, for my part, I was afraid to go to sleep that night, for fear of seeing that awful HEAD again.

There was something so diabolically malignant in its gleaming eyes; it froze my blood to think of it.

And there could be no *hocus pocus*, as Mr. Denyse called it, about its appearance.

It had suddenly started into view in the depth of a thundercloud, and thunder had followed it, on the open sea, out of sight of land. I had seen it moving up and down, showing that it was alive, and I felt as if I should go raving mad, if it came to me again. I lay awake, starting at every creak of the vessel (and she groaned awfully) till it seemed to me it must be near morning, when at last I fell asleep, and woke up with a start from a wonderful dream.

I thought I was in a lovely tropical island, full of flowers and fruit, and that I met my poor dead cousin, Mungo Johnston, who told me that he was a spirit, and had married a sea maiden. And he told me to follow him, and we walked out under the sea into a great palace of coral, where we heard the most ravishing melodies from the sea maidens. And then it was that I woke up, to hear the sweet music still sounding, and see a bright light on the wall at the other side of the cabin, in the midst of which, just as plain as ever I saw anything in the world, I saw my dead cousin, Mungo Johnston, dressed just as he was in the wreck, looking at me.

I was so startled I sat up, crying:

"Oh, my God, Mungo! What do you want with me? What is it, in God's name?"

He opened his lips, and I heard him say, in a faint, far-away sort of voice:

"Mamie! Mamie! I loved you, Mamie!"

And then he began to fade away, thinner and thinner, till all of a sudden he vanished, leaving me so frightened that I fell back on my pillow, and I must have fainted away dead, for I don't remember any more till I woke in the morning, with a raging headache, to find the sun shining in my eyes through the stern windows.

I felt wretched enough, and had no one to tell, for poor grandpa seemed as much shaken as I was.

I couldn't eat any breakfast, though Inez tried to coax me, and I verily believe I should have gone into brain fever if I hadn't heard some one saying, late in the afternoon:

"To-morrow we shall be in Batavia, Mr. Bruce; and your terrors will be over, sir."

"God be thanked," said grandpa's voice. "I'm no that thankless as I seem, Maister Vanderdecken; but I canna help it, sir. The puir bairn's sick wi' fright at the speerits, and I'm no muckle the better. I'll no deny ye've treated us like a gentleman; but I'll no be easy till I get on dry land again."

I heard Mr. Vanderdecken say, kindly;

"I'm sorry the poor child was so much affect-

ed by my experiment; but I will make amends for it in Java. You must, as soon as you have accomplished your business in Batavia, visit me at my home in the Raj of Samarang. There are some interesting ruins there I must show you."

"I'll come wi' pleasure," said grandpa feebly. "I fear naught on land, sir, but on the sea, I own I—"

And then their voices died away, and I fell asleep from exhaustion and fever.

I woke up again, in the middle of the night, to see the same vision, and hear the same voice, saying:

"Mamie! Mamie! I loved you, Mamie!"

That was too much.

I am writing this now, after a three months' fever, in Batavia. MARY BRUCE.

—:o:—

PART III.

DOCTOR SAM'S STORY.*

CHAPTER I.

MY BATAVIA PRACTICE.

It's not a bad thing to be in medicine, if you have a big practice among rich people, where a fellow's brain counts for something, and he gets good price for good work that no one else can do.

But a young doctor without cash has a hard row to hoe, and don't you forget it, most ambitious of youths.

It's all very well to talk about the pleasures of science, and I won't deny that there's a certain pleasure about a good case of excision of the hip-joints, when a man uses the "forty-second" operation, and has to grab his arteries by the feel, with the pleasant knowledge that if he misses one, the chances are that he'll have a "stiff" on his hands inside of one minute, and a lot of people calling him a "murdering butcher" behind his back, all over the town. Yes, that's exciting, certainly.

And I've seen the time when I went nearly crazy over a nice healthy case of cancer in the pylorus, since the latest experiments in vivisection. It was just glorious to feel that I was doing something never done before, and saving a man's life, when the best surgeons in Europe had to give up Napoleon as a bad job.

Wish I'd had a chance at his cancer. He might have lived to see the Second Empire, poor fellow.

But science won't keep a man alive, when he's got a stingy old uncle who won't give him a square chance at home, through his confounded jealousy; so here I am, among the Dutchmen and Malays, and likely to stay here all the rest of my life, I fancy.

Not but what I've a pretty comfortable sort of a cave to live in, and the doctors in Batavia are such a lot of old-fashioned botches that I've had no trouble to scoop in quite a snug practice. And the Dutch planters spend money like water, and drink "rack punch" so steady that they're always running into fevers.

I flatter myself I can knock fevers about as quick as any man I know in the profession, so that hundred-dollar fees come in plenty to me.

But for all that, I can't help thinking how different it might have been with me if I'd only had the sense to go for Mamie Bruce when she was wooable, instead of fooling away my time like a calf, philandering round my respected but volatile aunt by marriage, Mrs. Agnes Peters.

For I can't help thinking, without vanity, that I had as good a chance as any of the others. There were three men on the Spindrift, and I was one of them, who had an equal chance. Two of them were blind gone on the girl. One of them was as homely as a brush fence, but smart as chain-lightning; the other was good-looking, but constitutionally bashful, and didn't dare to make hay while the sun shone; and I was the third, with a knowledge of women the others did not possess, and not bad-looking, if I say it.

* Dr. Sam's account of the matters connected with the Flying Dutchman of 1880 has a fault common to medical men's lucubrations, that of lugging in his dog-Latin and Greek names of diseases by the ears, so to speak, at every turn. To aid the non-professional reader to understand his meaning, I have been obliged to annotate freely.

The "forty-second" operation that he refers to so gloatingly, is done, as the name implies, in less than a minute, and made the reputation of Dr. Sayre, of Bellevue Hospital. It is extra hazardous, of course, as the limb is taken off in two or three cuts without tying the arteries, which have to be sought in the stump when they are pumping out blood by the quart.

The *pylo-us*, referred to lower down, is the passage from the stomach to the intestines. Cancer here killed the great Napoleon. Since the late experiments in vivisection, Parisian surgeons have actually cut into the living body of a sufferer from this terrible disease, cut out the cancerous portion and saved the patient. The doctor is excusable to refer to this as one of the greatest triumphs of modern medical science.

EDITOR.

But it wasn't to be, somehow.

When I woke up to try my chances I found they were gone, though it would puzzle an expert to find out *where* that girl's heart had gone. I don't believe she knew herself, and was hesitating between good looks and brains, and no good looks with more brains to compensate.

I have been asked to set down what I know of the Flying Dutchman, and in a strictly scientific light, I don't know much. That is, I have very strong suspicions on the subject, but no positive facts to support them; so I shall not mention them, save incidentally.

I saw the queer concern from the Spindrift, and twice again on the raft, and I saw her disappear in smoke. I believe she picked up Johnston, but as I've never seen him since I can't assert it.

I know we got to Singapore safe, and I know my respected uncle was in a deuce of a hurry to get me off to Batavia, and made himself so confoundedly disagreeable that I packed up and left him.

I can't deny that he treated me well financially, and I had the best of letters from old Bruce, who, I believe, wasn't over anxious to have a penniless young doctor hanging round his granddaughter.

These old fellows who have money are always down on brains till the brains coin money. Then they all put on the same literary airs, and pretend to dote on art and science.

I took passage on an old tub called the George Washington, and a long one we had. It riled me to see the little *proas* fly by us while we wallowed about like a confounded old porpoise chasing a flying-fish.

Denyse was first mate, and he and I struck up quite a friendship, for I found him a well-informed man, though he had taught himself, and had the usual morbid ways of those sort of fellows.

But he could beat me on mathematics, astronomy and mechanics, while he was willing to learn chemistry, so we hit off pretty well.

Of course we talked of Mamie Bruce, and both got as melancholy and morbid over it as men will in times of sluggish digestion and small exercise.

We lost two men during the voyage, who jumped overboard in a fit of *delirium tremens*, or remorse at having broken the pledge, I don't know which.

They were two crazy Danes who had been with us on the Spindrift, chock full of superstition and race pride, like all those broken-down races in Europe who can't keep up with the nineteenth century.

They were picked up by a passing ship—a regular clipper, with an auxiliary engine—and we found them in the calaboose at Batavia when we got there, and learned that they had been dropped there by a Dutch millionaire called Vanderdecken, said to be a descendant of the Flying Dutchman, and going by the same title on account of his habits of wandering about all the time.

I went to see them, and found them pretty well broken down from rough treatment, but reasonable enough, having been kept off their rum for a week.

But what surprised me was the story they told.

They insisted that they had seen old Bruce and Mamie on board Vanderdecken's ship, and that they had been visited by ghosts, one of whom was Old Nick himself, who had given them a temperance lecture.

I laid it all to the state of their nerves, and gave them some bromide of potassium; but I couldn't help wondering what put the Bruces into their heads till I saw Denyse, who was getting in cargo on the old tub I had come in.

To my surprise, he told me the men were right. He had seen Miss Bruce and her grandfather on deck.

"Then why in thunder didn't you bail them?" I asked him; for I should have done so myself.

He colored a little, and answered: "I had no right to force myself on them when they were in the company of a richer man than myself. The captain didn't want to speak the ship, and I had no business to take the command from him."

"Oh confound your notions of discipline," I said. "They freeze the flesh and blood out of a man."

"Do they?" said he, with a sigh. "I wish they did, Peters. I find my flesh and blood getting the best of me, when I desire most to nail my mind on science."

So we agreed to disagree, and I went to deliver my letters, and met with a very cordial reception, on account of my having Dutch blood in me.

I was invited out to all sorts of houses, and must say I found Batavia a very jolly place, where I was quite a lion among the doctors on account of my having a nice lot of instruments they'd never seen before. The microscope in medicine was quite a revelation to them, and when I cured one or two cases of malarial fever that they were used to consider hopeless, the whole town was after me, and I had all I could do.

And it was after I'd been there about six

weeks that one morning I saw a Malay *syce*, or groom dressed in a very gorgeous livery, ride up to my door leading a handsome saddled horse, and my boy, (I had four of them, costing me about twenty cents a week each, board and all), brought me up a note, sealed with the figure of a winged head, (bat's wings, by-the-by), from the millionaire I had heard so much about, the great Mr. Vanderdecken.

I wasn't such a fool as to hesitate long about going to his house, you may imagine. I had heard of him as being worth untold sums, and free with his cash, unlike most millionaires, and I knew his practice must be worth something comfortable.

And money rules the world, as I've found out, so I'm going to get all I can.

The note was very brief, and informed me that a lady lay sick at his country house in Selang, a little suburb about six miles away, and the Batavia doctors had given her up. Would I come to see her? He would not hold me responsible for a failure.

The letter was signed "Vanderdecken" as if he had been a noble man, and of course I went.

The Malay *syce* held my stirrup as I mounted the led horse and piloted me out of the city into the rich country round Batavia, where it seems as if nature was trying how prodigal she could be of her riches.

It was the first time I'd had a chance to get out of Batavia, and I enjoyed the ride among the sugar-cane fields, coffee and tea plantations, coconut groves, and all sorts of crops grown nowhere else.

Then we got out of these into a belt of forest, and it seemed as if we had jumped out of civilization into a trackless wilderness in one minute, for the Malays and Dutch stick close together, and as soon as you get out of a settlement you run into virgin forest.

There's no such thing as detached farms there.

The forest was about four miles wide and then out we jumped again into open rolling country, where the air was at least twenty degrees cooler than the sweat-bath of Batavia, and the foot-hills were dotted with villas, behind which towered up the blue peaks of the mountains in the interior, more than one of them having its little cloud of smoke over a crater.

My Malay pointed to a long, low white villa about a mile off and said:

"Vanderdecken, sahib."

It looked like a big place, and as we drew nearer I saw that it was a very rich one. It seemed to be built of white limestone and surrounded with a very broad colonnade so that the body of the house was always in a cool blue shadow.

It was set in the midst of the most brilliant green lawns I ever saw, dotted with clumps of teak trees at least a hundred feet in height.

Near the house there were beds of flowers set so close together that the building seemed to rise out of a colored velvet cushion, and little herds of graceful spotted deer and antelopes were feeding about or resting under the trees as we rode up.

What was not quite as pretty was a brute of a rhinoceros, who came snuffing up to us, and seemed bent on giving me a rip, till we heard the sound of a horn, and out raced a lot of half-naked Malays, with long pikes, who prodded the brute till he ran off, squealing like a pig, when my *syce* laughed and said:

"Allee samee playee, sahib. No hurt sahib."

"Confound him!" I said, "what's he doing here?"

"Vanderdecken sahib callee him pettee?" said my gentleman, affably. "Sahib bab muchee plenty pettee, tiger, elephantee, allee ressee."

And so he went on in his confounded pigeon talk, which he had picked up from the Chinamen, I suppose.

It's a queer thing how that pigeon English will carry a man all through the East, when they don't understand anything else but their own tongue. One has to learn it as a sort of neutral language, strange to both parties but used by a kind of common consent, because neither knows any better.

We rode on to the house and found that the Malay had told the truth. Mr. Vanderdecken's "pets" seemed to range over all the dangerous brutes he could find, and I'll be hanged if I didn't almost step on a huge python, who lay coiled up in the sun by the door-step, and didn't trouble himself to move, beyond turning his wicked-looking head to look at me. I think, if the *syce* hadn't been there I should have given a yell, but I had become used to the severe dignity white men have to show among these yellow fellows, and I pretended not to mind the snake, though I confess my heart beat like a trip-hammer till I was in the house.

Then came another agreeable surprise. The broad entrance hall was dark and cool compared to the glare outside, and I didn't see clearly for nearly a minute, though I knew I was treading on a hard polished floor, slippery as glass.

I saw some Malay servants salaaming before me and making me signs to follow quietly, as if they knew there was sickness in the house, and then I felt something furry rub against my hand, like a big dog.

I looked down and found that a huge tiger was tramping me in his amiable fashion, his face set in the most diabolical grin conceivable, while his great tail waved like a fan.

And those confounded Malays saw me start, and grinned, too, while one whispered:

"Tiger no baddee. Catchee muchee miccee, sahib. No flaiddee tiger, sahib."

"I'm not afraid, you yellow jackass," said I (which was a lie, by the by). "Where's the sick lady I was sent for to see, and where's your sahib?"

"Sahib Vanderdecken comee, sahib. Dis way," he told me, and then he led me on through a long, lofty corridor with brilliantly painted walls covered with the sort of pictures they have in Buddhist temples and joss-houses, only more artistic and lavishly gilded and lacquered to protect them from the damp heat of that sultry climate.

At last he ushered me into a grand saloon at least sixty feet long (land's cheap in Java), and told me, quietly:

"Vanderdecken sahib comee plenty muchee soonee."

Then he left me to cool my heels and amuse myself by looking at the saloon, which certainly was well worth inspection, for it fairly overflowed with wealth. The nearest approach I'd seen to it was in the palace of the Rajah of Patarashku, a petty prince, about twenty miles from Batavia, who had sold his dominions to the Dutch and lived on a heavy annuity, with all his ancestors' treasures besides. But he was an ignorant boor as regards European art, and I found cheap French chromos and bronzed plaster statuettes in his saloon beside jeweled *krisses* and cimeters worth thousands of dollars. But Mr. Vanderdecken's saloon, while it had all the gorgeousness of a native's palace, had none of the incongruities so common there, and I was convinced against my will that he must be a man of culture and education, if he did have an eccentric taste in pets.

I had hardly got through my rapid inspection when the door opened and into the room walked one of the handsomest men, for a half-breed, I'd ever seen. I say for a half-breed, for I could see he was one in an instant.

And I don't believe in mixing breeds. The cross very seldom follows the best parent, and the Eurasians I had seen in Singapore were a miserable lot, sure to go under in the survival of the fittest.

But this fellow was a man all over, not very tall, but put together like a prize-fighter, with an iron jaw and a pair of eyes that looked as if *myopia** was never likely to trouble them.

He was dressed in full Malay costume but spoke to me in perfect English, whose only fault was that it was a little too precise and latinized, showing that he had learned it from books.

"You are the American doctor of whom I hear such distinguished testimonials," he said half inquiringly.

I bowed as I answered: "I fear people overrate my abilities, Mr. Vanderdecken, but such as they are, they are at your service."

He nodded his head and looked doubtful.

"You are a young man for a physician," he said, slowly.

"That's a fault mends daily," said I. "Napoleon had it when he took the Army of Italy and he lost it before Waterloo."

His face lighted up as he answered:

"An old but apt retort. I admire Napoleon, sir. He fought England to the last."

"And she beat him too," said I.

"Perhaps—in one way. But he beat her in another, for his nephew—some say his son—met the queen of England as an equal and kissed her before all Europe."

Then he seemed to regret talking so much, for he pursued hurriedly:

"I sent for you in a dangerous case, I may say a desperate one. A young lady, daughter—no—granddaughter of a friend of mine, lies at the point of death. If you can cure her I will cheerfully pay any sum you demand, but I have not much hope for she has had brain fever for weeks—"

"Are you a physician?" I asked, interrupting him without any ceremony.

He seemed confused at my abruptness.

"No," he said, rather shortly.

"Then how do you know she has brain fever?" I asked him.

"Doctor Van Vliet said so, and all his colleagues have united in the opinion," he said rather stiffly.

"Well," I replied (for I always believe in taking a millionaire down if you can do it safely in a professional capacity) "I belong to the New School, who do not recognize any such thing as what is vulgarly called brain fever, and we don't pronounce on a disease till we can classify it. Diagnosis never lies, sir, though it may be read wrong. You have a patient in the house. Where is she? If I want to ask questions, I'll ask after I've seen her."

The man listened, and when I had done he said:

*More dog-Latin or rather Greek. The doctor might just as well have said "short-sightedness," for that's all it means.—EDITOR.

"I like you, doctor. You talk sense. Follow me."

I knew I had him then, and I said no more, for the greatest mistake a doctor can make is to talk too much. It may do with one class of patients, but the hard-headed ones are apt to think you a fraud if you let them see how much groping there is in the science of medicine.

I followed Mr. Vanderdecken, who led me to a large airy room at the top of the house, which commanded a view of sea and land and had a lovely breeze blowing through it.

"Good!" I whispered. "Good place for a sick-room. Who put her here?"

"I did," said he, in the same tone. "Doctor Van Vliet said she ought to be kept in the dark and bled, but she only seemed to get worse. That is her grandfather sitting by the bed."

The bed was a huge four-poster, old Dutch style, with curtains of mosquito nets; and I saw the figure of an old man with bowed head through the veil.

He was sitting dejectedly there, his chin on his hands which rested on a crutch stick.

Inside the bed I saw the figure of a female very small in size more like a child than a woman.

A black-haired Malay girl was kneeling by the bed as if in great grief.

Of course my first business was to examine my patient and I found, as soon as I touched her pulse, that she was pretty near gone, with a thready, intermittent, irregular beat, as if she hadn't enough blood to get up a decent fever. Yet I saw she had been recently bled, for her arm was bound up where they'd lanced her.

"The Dutch butchers!" I muttered. "No wonder he said the case was desperate. The man uses his eyes."

And then for the first time I looked at the girl's face and saw that *Mamie Bruce lay there*.

Her skin was like marble; they had cut off her bright golden hair; her cheeks were fallen from the round plumpness I remembered so well; her little mouth was half open, with lips of a dull gray instead of pink, and her glorious eyes were set and glazed; but I knew her in a moment.

In that moment my whole past seemed to rush over me like a wave, and I almost burst into a cry of pain, for I felt as if I were losing my own life in the woman I loved.

The next my physician's instinct rose up in me and I ground my teeth as I muttered:

"By heavens, she shall not die!"

Then I turned on Vanderdecken as if he had been a slave and I his master. I felt in every fiber of my being the old adage that "The chamber of the sick is a realm and the physician is king."

"Answer my questions quick, and as short as you can," said I sharply. "If you don't know, say so. Yes and no when you can. There's no time to lose. Will you do this?"

"Yes," said Mr. Vanderdecken.

CHAPTER II.

HOW I SAVED MAMIE BRUCE.

"Now," said I, "how long has she been ill?"

"Three weeks," said he. "She was sick about six weeks ago, but recovered, as we thought?"

"What do you mean by that?" I asked.

"Who thought?"

"Doctor Van Vliet," he said.

"Oh, then she's been six weeks sick," said I.

"Yes," he answered, with some hesitation.

I reflected. I had been just that time in Batavia, so she must have been in Singapore.

"Where was she first taken ill?" I asked.

"At sea," he answered, shortly.

"Under what circumstances?"

"She was alarmed in the night by bad dreams."

"Bad dreams? What do you mean?"

"That she had them—that's all."

For the first time my millionaire's eyes didn't meet mine squarely, and I saw he was lying; but I had no time to lose, so I went on.

"You say she got better. Was she sensible?"

"For a little, the doctor thinks."

"Where was she then?"

"In Batavia, at the house of her grandfather's agent, near the Malay quarter."

I knew the quarter well enough, chock full of miasma and typhoid germs.

"When did she fall ill again?"

"The same day."

"When was she moved here?"

"The next day. I insisted on it as a healthier location."

"Were you there?"

"Of course."

He stiffened up at this, as if he didn't like my close questioning on non-medical subjects, so I asked:

"What has been her treatment here?"

"Blisters at the back of the neck, calomel, and bleeding," he answered readily. "Do you wish to see Doctor Van Vliet, doctor?"

"No," I snapped out, "I don't want to see the old butcher. Bleeding a woman when she's nearly dead from weakness, confound him."

"She had a high delirium," he urged, "and it vanished as soon as she was bled."

"Vanished!" I echoed. "I should say it did;

and life will vanish too, if we can't get some blood into her. Have you a swift horse and an intelligent groom, to go to my lodging?"

"As many as you like."

"Very well."

I sat down and wrote a note to my landlady (the only Yankee woman I'd found in Batavia), telling her to send me my transfusion syringe and a box I described.

This I sent off post-haste, and then I told my millionaire what I was going to do.

I wanted a good healthy young person, who would consent to lose about six ounces of blood, to be sent into this poor girl's veins.

"Go and find some one," I said.

Up jumped the Malay girl from her knees, and I saw that it was Inez Diaz, Miss Bruce's maid. The poor girl must have loved her mistress devotedly, for she implored me to let her be bled to save her mistress.

But as soon as I'd felt her pulse and looked at her, I told her it wouldn't do.

"You're more than half-sick yourself," I told her. "I want a strong, healthy person."

Mr. Vanderdecken nodded.

"I know where to find one," he said.

"Bring him to me," I said. "I want to take a look at him, to see if he's a healthy subject."

"I will send him in," he answered.

He went out, and while I was waiting for the arrival of my instruments I took a good look at old Bruce, who seemed to be quite broken down by his loss.

He knew me and nodded absently, muttering:

"Eh, doctor, a sair sight—a sair sight! The last of the Bruces gaun fast. Eh, but God's will be done!"

"Ay, ay," I said to cheer him up, "that's all right. She won't die this time, Mr. Bruce; not a bit of it."

He brightened up.

"Oh, sir, d'ye think sae? Dinna jest wi' me."

"I mean what I say. These Dutch butchers have just about finished her, but I'm going to save her," I said cheerfully, though I felt far from cheerful. "Now, sir, I want you to drink something for me. You're sick too, and I don't want more than one on my hands at a time."

"I'll do anything ye say, doctor," he replied humbly, "gin ye'll only save my Mamie. Oh, sir, she's all I hae in the wide world."

"Will you do what I say then?" I asked him.

"I will, sir, I will."

"All right."

I saw the old man, and the girl too, were nearly beat out with anxiety and watching; so I gave them each about twenty drops of laudanum, and sent them off, as the boy came in with my chest.

Then I sent for Mr. Vanderdecken, and he came back with a tall Malay, who looked as wiry and tough as a race-horse in good condition, and my host said quietly:

"Mr. Hassim has offered himself, doctor."

"Mr. Hassim's just the man," said I. "He's tough as whalebone, and won't miss the blood. Does he talk English?"

"No," said Vanderdecken hastily, "not a word. But he understands it. Tell him what you want."

I told Hassim in English what I was going to do, and reminded him that, if he gave his blood to save the life of a fellow-creature, he was doing a noble act.

"It may make you feel faint," I told him, "and if you are afraid, tell me, and I'll take some one else."

The Malay fixed his eyes on me, and then on the poor girl in the bed. He had very peculiar eyes, a pale hazel, looking green in most lights, but full of little specks of gray. I have always found such eyes among the most powerful.

He had a very strong sensible face, full of decision and character, though his high cheekbones and prominent nose, with two bends in it, made him decidedly plain in personal appearance.

He pointed to the patient and then laid his hand on his heart and motioned as if he was ready to pour out all the blood he had to save her; for he nodded and smiled, as if to express his pleasure at the idea of being of service to her.

"Now," said I to Vanderdecken, "I want some good women nurses here, when I'm through. If you can get a Sister of Charity so much the better. There's a convent of them in Batavia, and they don't get drunk and go to sleep like the hospital women, nor chatter like the young girls. Send for one at once."

"I shall do so," said he, gravely, and he went away to give an order.

Then I told Hassim to show me his arm, and upon my word, I was delighted with it. I've seen plaster-casts of athlete's arms that are beautiful; but this Malay had as pretty as any of them—not very gross, but so clean and symmetrical, it was a pleasure to think of dissecting it.

It didn't take me long to get ready for the operation, and I very soon had the pleasure of pumping about six ounces of good, red, healthy blood out of the arm of my friend Hassim into

the veins of poor little Mamie Bruce, and of hearing a low murmur of wonder going up from the Malay servants, who had been called in to help, as they saw the effects of the transfusion syringe.

When I begun, the poor girl lay on the bed like a corpse, with pulse hardly perceptible. As the transfusion went on, the color returned to her cheeks, the glassy stare went out of her eyes, and she closed them naturally, and fell fast asleep, like a baby.

I hadn't time to watch any one else, but as soon as I thought she had enough blood to assist nature, I turned to look at Hassim's face, and I was surprised to find that yellow Malay staring at that girl with an expression there was no mistaking—I'd seen it so often in men looking at Mamie Bruce.

The fellow was dead gone on her, and his eyes were swimming in tears as he looked, quite oblivious of my presence till I coughed.

He had lost six ounces of blood, and had a right to feel faint, but I'll swear he colored slightly when he caught my eye on him, and he turned away his face from the bed instantly.

I bound up his arm and told him to keep quiet and go to bed early, when he asked me in Malay (of which I had of course picked up considerable by this time) whether I would need him again.

"No," I said, in English; "if this doesn't set her on the right road it's no use repeating the operation. If she wakes sensible I may want you again, to help her on her way to recovery."

He bowed first, and then seemed to think that was not respectful enough, for he treated me to a ceremonious salaam, Malay fashion, and went out.

I watched by the bed alone for nearly two hours, when a nice, sensible-looking Sister of Charity, whom I had seen before in the fever hospital, came in and told me the Mother Superior had sent her to stay till the sick lady got well.

"How is it they can spare you so long, Sister Angela?" I asked her. "Not that I object, but I thought it was not according to your rules."

Sister Angela wasn't too pious to smile, so she said:

"Rules are easily relaxed in special cases, doctor. Mr. Vanderdecken has endowed five beds in my ward of the Catholic Hospital to induce the Mother Superior to send me."

"All right," I said. "He's a good sort of man. Now attend to what I say."

And I gave her full instructions to keep the room cool and dark, give the patient brandy and water every time she awoke, and let her sleep for all she was worth till I came back.

And sleep she did, in a way that showed she had turned the corner at last.

That murdering butcher of a Dutch doctor had killed the fever (if fever it was, which I suspected, from the symptoms described, to have been *meningitis*),* but had killed the patient too.

I mean what I say. As far as Mamie Bruce was concerned, she was about as dead as a doornail when I got there.

To be sure, some vital functions still went on, but the girl was dead to everything but the mechanical work of breathing, and almost ready to drop that too.

Now she was alive again, with a man's blood in her veins, and he a Malay. As I rode off to Batavia in the evening, leaving word that I would come again at midnight if not wanted sooner, I thought of all this.

I confess I felt not a little proud. It's a good deal to think you've cheated death of a victim, and snatched her by main force from him.

I'd saved Mamie Bruce's life. "She would owe it to me," I thought all the way home.

Then the idea occurred to me:

"Not a bit of it. The Malay saved her, not you. You didn't give her a drop of blood."

"Yes, but if I'd not been there, the Malay wouldn't have known enough to do it. I'm entitled to say I saved the girl's life by my knowledge and ready resource."

"Not a bit of it. You could have done nothing but for the Malay. Your blood's not in a fit state to help anybody, and you have to look out for yourself."

"Well, I'll split the difference. I divide the credit with the Malay."

And I left the argument at that.

I had to fly around that evening pretty lively, and at eleven o'clock precisely, Mr. Vanderdecken's *syce* brought me a fresh horse, and took me off at a tearing gallop to the villa. I asked him if anything was wrong, and he said that he had heard nothing, but had come in obedience to the orders I left behind me.

I confess I was a little nervous about entering the grounds at night, with Mr. Vanderdecken's very eccentric "pets" roaming around loose, but the *syce* told me they had all been shut up in the beast-house by the sahib's order, as soon

* *Meningitis* is another dog-Greek term for an inflammation of the membranes surrounding certain organs of the brain, distinct from inflammation of the brain substance itself, which is exceedingly rare. It is probable the doctor refers to this when he says elsewhere that there is no such thing as brain fever—or words to that effect.—EDITOR.

as he heard how I had been startled on my first visit.

The intelligence relieved my mind; for it's not a nice thing to come on a tiger or a python in the dark, even if they do call him tame.

I found the house lighted up with Japanese lanterns, and was taken up to the sick-room, where Sister Angela was quietly counting her beads by the bedside, as placid and ready as usual.

I heard her mutter "*in secula seculorum*," as I came in, showing she had just finished her prayers.

"Well, sister, how's the patient?" I asked.

"Sleeping, ever since. She woke once, and asked for water, and I gave her her stimulants."

"Any delirium?"

Sister Angela hesitated.

"She mutters every now and then some name, I never heard. Is there such a name as Mungo?"

"Mungo?" said I.

"Yes, that is it?" said Sister Angela, triumphantly.

"Certainly. It's a Scotch name, Scotch all over, like Sholto. It's her grandfather's Christian name."

Sister Angela looked relieved.

"Oh, that is it."

I knew well enough what the poor child had been muttering about. Her mind had been running on Mungo Johnston even during health, and her brain trouble possibly had some connection with it.

I went and looked at her as she lay there, and on my word I found it very hard to retain my professional self-control and treat her as a mere patient. All the wasting and fever had not taken away her childish beauty. It had rather invested it with a touching pathos, hard to resist. One feels so sorry for an innocent child, struggling, with its puny strength, against the power of the destroyer that fells the mightiest man.

I felt her pulse and was delighted to find it steady and nearly normal. She was sleeping heavily and I told Sister Angela to let her alone as long as she could, and keep every one away, even her grandfather. I knew that if she woke sensible, the presence of a nun would agitate her less than any person she knew, who could recall the past to her.

I remained in the room nearly an hour, watching her closely, and detected no signs of delirium. At last I went away, promising to return in the morning, and I was there again an hour after sunrise, to find her awake and staring wistfully around the room, evidently quite rational.

Sister Angela told me she had not said a word, but appeared to be puzzled as to where she was, though perfectly docile and obedient.

Now came the ticklish time to me.

My patient was sensible, but as weak as a baby. She recognized me at once, for I saw her smile faintly, as if she were amused at something, and I knew what it was. I for once made a donkey of myself before her at Singapore, and she remembered it.

But the physician in me, at that moment, had quite swallowed up the donkey, and I only felt glad that she recognized me without agitation.

So I said to her, as gently as possible:

"I'm your doctor now. Don't try to talk. You have been very ill, but you're getting better. This lady is Sister Angela, the best nurse I know. Do just as she tells you, and I'll let you talk to-morrow. I am going to ask you some questions. If you want to say 'yes,' close your eyes. If you want to say 'no,' close your lips. Are you hungry?"

She closed her eyes and smiled. I was delighted.

"Give her some chicken broth, Sister Angela," I said, "and put something in it."

Sister Angela was a regular trump of a nurse. She had it ready in the next room, and my patient had not to wait over a minute before she was being fed like a baby with broth and brandy.

She took it with a relish, and then dropped off into a doze which deepened into a regular slumber, and I made Sister Angela darken up the room while I went down to see my millionaire.

I found him waiting for me, and his pale face wore a look of relief when I told him that my patient was better, and that, if we could keep her from agitation, she would pull through.

"What do you wish me to do?" he asked.

"Well, sir," I said, "it depends on whether you will answer me fully, or not, what I ask you."

He frowned slightly.

"What do you wish to ask?"

I saw there was some confounded mystery about the man; but I had a life at stake, and I couldn't afford to be delicate, so I said:

"Mr. Vanderdecken, to save that child upstairs, I must know exactly what was the agitating cause of her first trouble. She has had a severe shock, and if I am groping in the dark as to what it was, she may be agitated again. If that takes place, if anything calls back to her memory the beginning of her illness, she'll go off like a snuffed-out candle. I presume, from your silence, that you feel, in some sort, respon-

sible for her first shock, with which you were connected in some way, innocent, no doubt, but still more or less direct. Will you tell me, or not, what you know as to her first illness? If you do so, I can save her. If you will not, I must give up the case."

He started slightly.

"Give up the case?"

"I mean what I say," said I gravely. "I am a physician; but I cannot work a miracle."

He turned away his face and remained silent for more than a minute, while I watched him closely.

The man was agitated; that was clear.

At last he said in a low tone:

"Ask on."

"Will you answer without reserve?" I asked.

"I will," he answered; and I saw he meant it.

"Where did the first shock take place?" said I.

"On my yacht—the Phantom."

"Of what nature was it?"

"An experiment of mine on her superstition, and that of her grandfather."

"What kind of an experiment?"

"An optical illusion, thrown with a magnesium lantern on a thundercloud at night."

"Did that throw her into a fever?"

"No. It frightened her, and predisposed her to impressions on her imagination."

"What was the immediate shock?"

"Another optical illusion."

"Where did that occur?"

"In the cabin of the Phantom."

"What did she see there?"

"A person she thought dead."

"Indeed? What was your object in frightening this poor child?"

He hesitated a long time, but at last said:

"A kind one, I assure you. My intention was good, but I made a mistake."

"What followed that experiment?"

"The poor child had a headache, but I did not think of it as anything serious. I—"

Here he stopped quite a long time, drew a heavy sigh, and added in a low voice:

"I permitted the experiment to be repeated, and she fell into a fever. That is all, sir, on my honor. I would give all my fortune to undo what has been done. I promise to follow your advice, and do as you order me hereafter. Can I do more?"

I let him talk on, and then I said:

"You could hardly do less, sir, as a gentleman. You spoke of a person thought to be dead. Is he alive?"

"He is," said Vanderdecken, almost in a whisper.

"Then why did you not tell her he was alive, and save her all this torture?"

Vanderdecken was silent, and I saw he did not intend to answer; so I went on severely:

"Why did not that person come himself like a man, instead of masquerading as a ghost? It has been an infamous conspiracy all round, sir, and I don't know which is most to blame, you or this young man, Mungo Johnston. You have both been practicing on the nerves of a young girl with all the resources of science, aided by her innocence; and by Heaven, Mr. Vanderdecken, you and he ought to be ashamed of yourselves!"

I was pretty warm by the time I finished, for the physician and the rival (yes, I own that—I don't want to blink my own asinine folly) were up in arms to resent this poor child's treatment.

Mr. Vanderdecken heard me like a marble statue.

He showed neither anger nor disapproval. He just waited till I had finished, and replied calmly:

"Dr. Peters, as a physician you have a right to say what you please. As a man you have no right to blame others till you have heard both sides of the story. I am responsible for the whole matter, and no one else. Do you understand me? I am responsible, for all was done by my orders, which no one in my employment has ever dared to disobey."

"Then," said I, sternly, "if that child dies, you have murdered her as much as if you had shot her!"

CHAPTER III.

THE CLAWS UNDER THE VELVET.

I EXPECTED the man would break out, for I knew he had the temper of a demon hidden under his marble exterior. His temperament showed that, and the color of his skin. Nature meant him for a savage chief, with no restraint on his passions.

To my surprise, he only bowed his head coldly, saying:

"I do not dispute your conclusion, sir, though your language is not polite. You are an advocate of vivisection, I understand."

"What has that to do with this case?" I asked, angrily, for any humanitarian nonsense always nettles me, and I thought he was trying to evade my point.

"Simply this, sir. You do not hesitate to torture dumb animals for the sake of saving human lives. I have facts to prove which require

experiment in order to secure results affecting the whole human race, and I differ from you only in this, that I do not pretend to deny my cruelty. But discussion is idle. What do you wish me to do? I will do it. If you ask it, I will leave this house and remove all objects likely to recall the past to your patient. Act your pleasure. I give you *carte blanche*."

I could not help seeing he was right in one thing. Quarreling wouldn't help Mamie Bruce. So I said—pretty coldly, I confess:

"There's only one way to save her life or reason. I must make her think she's in her grandfather's house in Batavia and that she fell ill in Singapore. The rest must be a dream. As for Johnston—"

He interrupted me.

"You will oblige me by not mentioning names. I have my reasons for it."

"Reason!" I echoed, getting mad again, "what reason? If the man's alive I'm not going to hide the fact when my patient gets well."

"Nevertheless," he said, "you'll do so. Further, you will not mention what I have told you to any living being, till I give you permission. Is that plain, Dr. Peters?"

He was as cold as ever, but the devil had waked up in his dark eyes, and they showed a good deal of the whites, as he spoke in a slow, precise way, showing he meant every word.

But my blood was up, and I don't bear to be threatened by any mixed breed of man; so I looked him in the eye and answered:

"Yes, it's plain. I'll be plain, too. I give no such pledge. If you've got Johnston hidden away anywhere, I want you to produce him, or I lay an information before the authorities as to this whole business. Is that plain, Mr. Vanderdecken?"

I could see, under his marble exterior, that he was keeping down his wild beast of a temper by a strong effort; but when I had finished he smiled and replied to me in a low, musical voice:

"Dr. Peters, did you ever see a bull charge a locomotive?"

"No," I said; "but I don't need to see it. The locomotive might kill the bull, but it's ten chances to one the bull would throw the engine off the track. You can't scare me, Mr. Vanderdecken."

He smiled as if he didn't resent my boldness, and said:

"Dr. Peters, I've said once, I like you. Don't force me to take measures to protect myself at the expense of your life and your patient's. I have my reasons for all I do; and I have too many foes, watching my every movement, to hesitate, when the question lies between my life, in which many are concerned, and individual lives, which concern only their families. You have found out certain things about me—not much, but enough to attract suspicion if made public—and those things you have gained from my weaker nature, in your capacity as a physician."

"Now, sir, understand me. I don't appeal to your fears; for I see you're a brave man and I respect you. I simply tell you this: Rather than sacrifice what is bound up in me, you and your patient and your patient's whole family must go under the wheels of my destiny and be crushed. If you wish to save the life of the child upstairs, come to my terms at once. That is all. I give you five minutes to decide, and will leave you alone to think it over."

And up he got, cold as an iceberg; walked to the door of his grand saloon, and went out.

But before the door closed, I had the pleasure of seeing the grim face of his pet tiger; heard him say something to the beast; and saw it lie down by the doorway, eying me steadily.

I think, if that man had shown a trace of anger, I should have held out; but there was something in his face so absolutely serene and merciless, as he passed me, that I saw he meant what he said, and began to understand his hold on Mungo Johnston, if he were really anywhere around.

Mr. Vanderdecken was clearly, in his sphere, a perfectly irresponsible despot, who valued human life no more than I did that of a cat.

I confess that his reference to vivisection rather staggered me. I remember when first I saw Professor Scowleigh operate on the sensory nerves of a living cat, spread out on the operating-table, the screams of the poor beast sickened me; but use had made me forget the pain to the individual in the benefit to mankind, and I have assisted at more than fifty vivisections since then, to prove a single fact, worth more to me than the lives of a hecatomb of elephants, ay, or millions either.

Now, for the first time, I began to see the cat's side of the story; and, by Jove, I began to feel for it.

I was just as powerless as the cat on the dissecting-table, after it has been spread out, without realizing what is coming till it is too late to resist. Vanderdecken had got me, and not only me, but all the others; and I saw, from the look in his face, that he would annihilate us all as coolly as if we were cats.

I began to think better of Henry Bergh, with all his crotchets, and wished he was around in Java.

And just as I got to this point, in walked my amiable host, followed by Mr. Hassim and that brute of a pet tiger, with the gentle remark:

"Doctor Peters, your five minutes have become seven. Are you ready to submit, or do you prefer to be removed, to save trouble?"

I looked at him and ground my teeth. It was very hard to give in, but I thought of the cat.

"I suppose I must submit," said I. "But I warn you I'll be even with you some day."

The man smiled placidly as he remarked:

"You are wise. Study dissimulation. It is the only defense of the weak. I have had to study it for twenty years and more. Bide your time. When it comes, if you still wish revenge on me, take it if you can. In the mean time, I am about to exact of you an oath and a hostage. If you break the oath your removal will be instant, and you will have the responsibility of bringing death on your patient, whose life depends on your skill. Are you ready to take the obligation I require?"

He spoke in the same cold, pitiless and passionless tone he had used all through the interview, and I was forced to answer him:

"I am ready, but I do so under protest."

He turned on me with the white of his eyes showing again, as he compressed his lips, asking:

"Do you mean you will break the oath?"

"No, I don't," said I. "As far as that goes, you can kill me and hush it up easy enough in this part of the world. If it only affected me, I'd tell you to go to the devil and do your worst; but I've made up my mind to save that poor child up stairs, in spite of you and the devil himself. You've done your best to kill her, you an that cur, Johnston, and your murdering Dutch doctor, and I've begun to save her life, with the help of this brave fellow here, who's too good to be your servant. Now, I'm going to save it. Do you understand? I take your oath, not because it will bind me a jot, for I call jaths superstitious farces, but to save Mamie Bruce's life. I shall keep it, not for fear of you or your tigers or cutthroats, but to save her. As for Johnston, if ever I meet him I'll give him a piece of my mind that'll cut into his Scotch hide, be it ever so thick. Now go on with your mummery. I'm ready."

Vanderdecken listened impassively, and answered:

"You will pronounce your name, and repeat after me the obligation."

"Go ahead," I answered, sneering; and then he repeated the following oath:

"I, Samuel F. Peters, in the presence of the Supreme Being and final cause of the whole Universe; knowing that his eye is on me; and with no mental reservation whatever, do promise, on my honor as a man; on my faith as a physician; and as I hope to save the life of the woman I love; that I will at all times keep sacred the secrets of my brothers and witnesses in this oath that I now assume; and that I will never mention to any human being, other than them, any fact which may have come to my knowledge through them. And I pray that the Ruler of the Universe will, if I break this pledge, punish me by striking down the dearest object in my heart, and leaving me alone, through all eternity. God help me to keep my word. AMEN."

I began the oath with a bitter sneer; I ended it with the sweat running down my forehead and hardly able to articulate my words.

When it was over, my singular host turned to Hassim and said in Malay:

"Go. He will keep the pledge."

Hassim went out, taking the tiger with him, and Mr. Vanderdecken continued to me:

"As you go from this house to-night, you will take with you a companion, who will remain with you at all times, till I know I am safe from any disclosures of yours. You will give out that he is your attendant, valet, assistant, what you will; but he will not leave you till further orders."

He spoke in such deep solemn tones that I was impressed against my will, and bowed slightly.

"Now," he said, "resume your role of doctor. I will set you an example of good faith. I am cruel, as you see, and I have no such thing as pity on anything that crosses my path. Aside from that I am a man with a man's sympathies. Save that child and I will make your fortune."

"I want no fortune," said I. "I do it for love of her, and to spite you. All I want you to do is to keep out of her sight, lock up your brutes, and, in one word, give her a chance."

He nodded gravely.

"I will do what you say."

Then he went to the door, and paused a moment to say:

"You may think more justly of me some day. I can wait for justice as long as for revenge."

Then he was off.

His words at parting showed me one thing. Despot as he might be in Java, with no law but his own will, the man was amenable to the force of opinion. He actually set some value on mine, while I began to despise myself for giving in to him.

But I forgot it all when I went up-stairs and found Mamie Bruce awake, and greeting me with a smile, not of amusement this time, but positive gratitude, as if she was glad to see me.

I suppose something of my recent agitation must have shown itself in my face, for her look changed to one of childish concern till I smiled and said, briskly:

"Now you are hungry again, I know. Sister Angela, more broth. I want my patient to eat and sleep for the next week, to be nothing but a little animal without any soul—say a little lamb."

She smiled again at this particularly mild joke, in a way that showed she hadn't much more sense than a lamb, and I soon had her fast asleep again, with more broth and brandy.

Then I went off to find Vanderdecken, and he met me in the lower corridor, when he said:

"I have sent away all the beasts except the deer and the antelopes. Will that do?"

"Yes," I said. "When are you going yourself?"

"To-night. Here is your companion. He is dumb, but he understands English. You will find him well versed in medicine, if you need an assistant in making up prescriptions. His name is Dundoo."

I looked at my future shadow. He was a rather old man—that is to say, he looked some ten years past middle life—perhaps sixty.

He was a pure Hindoo, as I could see by his complexion and general figure—rather slight naturally, with small bones, but round and inclined to fat, like all high-caste Hindoos.

He was a light caste, I could see, or he would have been much darker than he was.

One time he might have been handsome—probably was. A sensual, voluptuous sort of beauty, with the soulless regularity of a Greek statue, skin deep.

Now his face was seamed with the deep lines of strong passion into many furrows, and his venerable beard was snow white, hiding something of his full under lip, that looked as if its owner were fond of the table.

He was dressed as a Hindoo servant of the upper class, what they call a *kitmuggar* or butler in Singapore.

He looked intensely respectable and exceedingly crafty and hypocritical in his old age, and I felt much repulsion toward him, as Vanderdecken said:

"Dundoo will be with you day and night, and will go with you to your patients' rooms, all but here. He will carry your instruments for you and help you; but you are not to require any menial service of him, for he is a high-caste Brahmin. Do you object to his presence?"

"Decidedly I would if I could," I said testily.

"He'll be a confounded nuisance to me."

"Nevertheless, I require it on your pledge," said Mr. Vanderdecken, firmly. "It is necessary to my safety. You will be questioned everywhere, now it is known you visit here, and Dundoo must hear what is said. Do you or do you not promise to submit to his constant presence, and not attempt to evade it?"

"I promise," I said, grinding my teeth, and adding mentally, "If I don't choke the old thief some day, my name is not Sam Peters."

Mr. Vanderdecken held out his hand to me, saying:

"Farewell, doctor. You will not see me again till your patient is well. Use this house as your own. If you want anything, tell Dundoo, and he will see that you get it at once. He represents me."

"Hold on," I said, as he was turning away. "I want Hassim to-morrow or next day. Where will he be?"

Vanderdecken pursed up his lips.

"He will be with me, at sea."

"Well, I want him for another transfusion, in case my patient will stand it."

Vanderdecken shook his head.

"You can't have him. He will be away. Won't any one else answer your purpose?"

"No," I said shortly. "If I can't have him I won't answer for the girl's life."

Vanderdecken took a turn up and down the corridor, and at last snapped out in the first angry tone I'd heard him use:

"You doctors are worse tyrants than rajahs. When do you want him?"

"To-morrow evening, if I can."

"Will midnight do?"

"It will. If she's asleep, so much the better."

"You shall have him. Good-day."

And off he went, leaving me alone in his gorgeous house, with that old thief Dundoo watching me, in the most ultra respectful and hypocritical way.

I hardly knew what to do at first, whether to go back to Batavia, and look after my other patients, or stay where I was. Finally, I concluded to do the latter, and take a look over the house, so I said to Dundoo:

"Show me over the house. I want to see if there are any rooms in it better for my patient than the one she's in now."

He salaamed and beckoned me to follow him, when he took me over every room in a house that was fit to be a king's palace, both in the size of rooms and the richness of the furniture.

Of course it was difficult for me to extract

much information out of a dumb man who could only answer by signs, but I came to pretty strong evidence in certain parts of the house that Mr. Vanderdecken was either a Buddhist or Mohammedan in his religion, if he had any, and that he had been in the habit of keeping a regular harem of women around his house, for there were all sorts of articles of Malay feminine toilet in the different rooms, though I saw no women but a few servants of the lower classes.

At last it struck me that if I could find Inez Diaz, she might give me information, and I asked Dundoo:

"Where is the Spanish girl—Miss Bruce's maid? She was here last night with the old gentleman and I sent them both away."

Dundoo nodded and led me to another part of the house, where I found Inez Diaz, with a lot of Malay girls, crying as if her heart would break, while they were trying to soothe her and get her to eat some breakfast.

As soon as she saw me she ran to tell me how they wouldn't let her go see her dear mistress any more.

"That's all right," I told her. "They obey orders well here. If you go in there, crying, you'll send your mistress off into a fit and kill her. She's got one of the Sisters there for a nurse, who'll do better than you could. If you're a very good girl and promise to obey orders faithfully I'll let you help to-night. But you must sleep half to-day and be fresh. I didn't intend to find you awake now. Where's Mr. Bruce?"

"Asleep, doctor. Oh, I'll be very good if you'll only let me take care of my mistress."

I saw she was heavy eyed yet from the opium so I told her if she would eat a good breakfast and go to sleep again I would let her help Sister Angela at night. I knew Sister Angela couldn't keep up thirty six hours at a stretch without getting more or less worn out.

But I couldn't do what I wanted, question Inez with all those Malay girls and old Dundoo listening and I began to realize that Vanderdecken didn't mean I should, either.

I went to see old Bruce and found him sleeping hard as if he was worn out; so I didn't care to disturb him either, and concluded I would go to Batavia and make my usual round.

You can depend on one thing, I rode like a madman when I left the house with old Dundoo. I had two reasons for this.

I was riding another man's horse and didn't care whether I hurt him or not, and I wanted to make things as uncomfortable as I could for that old Hindoo spy set on me.

But he seemed to be a tough old chap, and he kept up with me without any apparent effort, a grin on his swarthy, cunning old face till I got to my lodging with the horses reeking with sweat, having ridden the six miles in less than twenty-five minutes. Then I took my own pony and made my rounds, with Dundoo behind me carrying my box of instruments and a medicine-chest, for I was bound to make him as uncomfortable as I could, and I loaded him down pretty well.

As I might have expected, every one had heard I was visiting Vanderdecken's, and there was much curiosity as to what the case was. But it didn't take much to stop their mouths when I told them it was against etiquette for me to speak of one patient to another. There was still some curiosity left about Dundoo, who followed me everywhere; so I told them he was my new assistant, whom I had hired to carry medicines about so that I might be certain I had them pure. When I had got through my round I looked at old Dundoo, expecting to find him tired out.

He had been carrying some twenty pounds in his hands all day long, what with the medicine-chest and all. But the old rat hadn't turned a hair, and there was the same respectful grin on his face, as he mounted his horse to follow me to Vanderdecken's, that he wore when he started.

I came to the conclusion he was as tough as I was, if not more so, and I began to hate the old scoundrel with a virulence that increased every moment as I rode on as hard as I could tear.

I picked out the worst ground on purpose to tire him out, and tried my best to run both horses to a standstill, but it was no use.

When I pulled up at Vanderdecken's the animals were reeking with sweat, and so was I, but old Dundoo was as cool as a cucumber, and I caught a covert grin on his face, as much as to say:

"I'll play that game with you all day, sir."

I had to wait and cool off before I went up to my patient's room. When I got there I found her asleep still, and Sister Angela told me she had taken her broth six times that day and was getting on well.

CHAPTER IX.

MY SHADOW.

THAT night I slept at Vanderdecken's house in my clothes, ready within call. Next day I knew that my patient's brain would become clearer and she would want to ask questions, so that I must be ready to keep her quiet.

I found old Bruce restored to comparative strength, and let him take a look at Mamie while she slept, under strict injunctions of si-

lence. Then I arranged matters with him, and we all agreed to swear we were still in Singapore at first, till we found whether she knew she was in Batavia.

I tried to question Bruce as to what had happened on board the ship, but, to my surprise—no, not surprise, after what had happened to myself—he was dumb as an oyster, and would only say:

"The lassie's sick, doctor. She's had a fever. I dinna ken the cause. Ye'll please not ask me."

And then I glanced at old Dundoo, and that confounded thief was grinning at me again, as much as to say:

"Try again, my friend. He's just where you are."

I saw there was only one way to get rid of Dundoo. Into Mamie Bruce's chamber he never went, under his orders. That was the only sacred place in the house. To question Bruce I must get him there, and this I could not do without the chance of killing my poor little patient with agitation.

At last Sister Angela sent out Inez Diaz, whom I had permitted to help, to tell me the child was awake and beginning to talk. She couldn't stop her.

I was up there in no time, you may be sure, and found Mamie Bruce flushed with a fever, and looking round the room, excitedly crying:

"I won't be quiet. Where's grandpa?—where's my grandfather? I want to talk to him!"

I went up to her, and said, sharply:

"Now, you *must* be quiet! I'm your doctor. Ask me any questions you want to know, and I'll answer."

I saw that I must satisfy her somehow.

"Where am I?" asked she, suspiciously.

"We're in the Hotel D'Europe, at Singapore," said I.

She looked at Sister Angela, and asked:

"Who's that cross old thing?"

"What cross old thing? You mean the good Sister who has been nursing you for weeks. That's Sister Angela."

She pouted out her pretty lips and made a grimace at me, like a regular spoiled baby.

"I don't care. She's a cross old thing. Where's grandpa?"

"He's down-stairs asleep, tired out with watching you. Do you want to see him? I'll wake him up."

For a minute she was silent, and then said, gently:

"No, no; poor grandpa. Let him sleep."

I felt satisfied she was mending. She had acquired the strength of self-control, though I could see that her nerves were all on edge yet, and she was hovering on the line between improvement and a relapse.

I thought I would calm her down, so I said:

"Will you take some medicine for me, like a good child? You have been very ill, and if you excite yourself you will probably die."

I was watching her while I spoke, and saw the color fading away, showing that the fever was breaking and the remission coming.

She looked wearily at me, and said, sleepily:

"I don't care. I want to die."

That was a bad sign of weakness, and I began to wish for Hassim very much. The girl wanted blood. That confounded fever had come back again.

I saw her dropping off into a doze, and I went out of the room and found old Dundoo listening at the door.

"Look here," I said to him, "I want Mr. Hassim at once. Can you get him for me?"

Dundoo shook his head, and drawing out a watch from his sash, pointed to seven o'clock and nodded.

"You mean he won't be here till seven?" I asked.

He nodded again.

"Very well," said I; "I *must* have him in an hour, or that girl will die, and I'll tell your master that you wouldn't send for him."

Dundoo's face looked the picture of sublime coldness, and he looked at the wall. I was so much incensed at him that I caught the old scoundrel by the throat and shook him, muttering under my breath as I shook:

"Confound your old selfish carcass, will you send for Hassim or won't you?"

He just allowed me to shake, as limp as a rag, and I got ashamed of myself in a moment, dropped him and strode away to the end of the upper corridor to a broad window facing the north and commanding a view of the sea beyond Batavia.

I was raging all through, and felt sure that Dundoo could send for Hassim if he would, but I had no way of helping myself. I didn't know where the man was, and I staid by the window chafing and thinking over how many hours must elapse before he came, when I was roused from my discontented reverie by the faint, distant boom of a gun, and saw a little white cloud float away, out at sea.

It was about seven miles off, and everything of course looked very small, but it served to distract my thoughts, so I turned to old Dundoo again, determined to make him do something.

There he stood beside me, impassive as ever, with the same lurking smile on his face.

"Get me a telescope," I said shortly. "You can do that, I suppose, can't you?"

He nodded to me and clapped his hands when a Malay, armed with a long Kreesse* in his sash, came out of a side door with a suddenness that showed he must have been close by when I shook Dundoo and made me feel rather uncomfortable.

Dundoo made him some signs, and the man went away and soon returned with a telescope of the best English make, which he handed to the Hindoo, who gave it to me.

I noticed a meaning glance exchanged between the men, as if both felt as if they would like to give me a few inches of cold steel, but didn't dare to, and I treated them with deliberate contempt on purpose to provoke them.

Then I fitted the glass to the proper focus and swept the offing where everything appeared as plain as if it were less than half a mile off to the naked eye.

I saw two ships, steamers, flying the British flag, standing off from shore, apparently to meet a third, coming in toward the harbor.

This third ship was coming very rapidly and seemed to be a full rigged clipper with a fair wind, going like the mischief.

I saw that she would get into the harbor ahead of them, for they appeared to be slow-goers, and I judged one at least to be an iron-clad, from her gloomy black hull and short masts.

I could not see the clipper's flag, for she was coming head on, with a steady breeze from the north and white-caps all round her.

And then, almost as soon as I had got them fairly into the field of vision, I saw each of the British ships fire a gun at the clipper—shotted guns too.

Neither hit her, though they were wickedly aimed, for I could see the lines of spray as they passed the ship ahead of her.

And then, all of a sudden, came a great burst of jet-black smoke from the clipper, in which she completely vanished, and all I could see was a smoke-cloud driving over the sea.

It grew thinner every now and then, when the white sails would shine through it in a ghostly sort of way, but every time this happened came a fresh jet of smoke and she vanished again.

I was very much interested in the sight, especially when I noticed how efficacious was this simple stratagem. Whoever the fellow was, he was burning Japanese day fire-works and hiding himself as completely as if he were in a fog.

The two British ships kept on firing, but I could see the spray-lines of their shot, and they missed him every time. They were shooting at a venture at a moving mark, and the mark was getting more out of reach every minute.

I could see this plainly from where I stood; and saw something else too.

The forts at the entrance of the harbor were all astir with men, and the Dutchmen were going to take a hand in the game, for the Britons had ventured in their eagerness inside the magic line of a nautical league from shore.

Bang! went a heavy gun from Fort Artevelde as I looked, and a shot went skipping over the waves at the iron-clad, as much as to say:

"Confound your impudence! You can get all you want of that from this shop."

The dull boom shook the window in front of me slightly, and I heard a faint scream from Mamie Bruce's room.

Throwing the glass to Dundoo, I ran to my patient, and found her rolling her head from side to side, and moaning:

"Oh, my God, Mungo—Mungo—why have you come again? Don't look at me so!"

The report had startled her, and she was out of her head again, so that I was unable to soothe her for some minutes, till she recognized our voices, and said to me in a weary, woeful sort of way:

"Oh, doctor, I've had such a horrid dream!"

"Never mind, my dear," I said; "it's only a ship firing a salute in the harbor. Try and go to sleep. Here, take this and be quiet."

I gave her some chloral, for I saw it was necessary to quiet her somehow, and off she went into a heavy sleep with muttering delirium that showed intense weakness.

I went out again to look at the offing and wonder what next to do. The time had come when that girl must have more blood or go off again.

Mechanically I went to the window. Dundoo was there, serene as ever, holding the spy-glass, and I asked:

"Well, did the clipper get off?"

He nodded with a grin, as if he was proud of it.

"I wonder who she is?" said I. "Do you know?"

Dundoo nodded again, and waved his hand to the floors and walls of the corridor meaningly.

"What?" said I. "Do you mean that the same man owns this house and her?"

Dundoo nodded emphatically.

"Then that is the Phantom," said I to myself, and I forthwith leveled the glass again.

* Kreesse. A Malay dagger with a wavy edge, generally poisoned.

I saw her just running into the harbor between the forts, clewing up her sails as she came, with the Dutch tri-color flaunting from her mainmast head, while the two Britons had hauled up in the offing and lay still on the sea with the black columns of smoke from their funnels streaming out like comets' tails.

And that was the Phantom.

I literally devoured her with the glass and I must say she was a beauty. I learned considerable about ships on the Spindrift and take as much pleasure as a sailor in looking at a pretty vessel.

The Phantom was a perfect picture.

I should judge her about eight hundred tons but her interior was finished off like a crack New York or Cowes club yacht, as I could see even at that distance, while her sailors wore brilliant patches of color in their gorgeous Malay dress. I could not of course yet make out persons but I could see the colors.

I saw her glide into the harbor and then I said to Dundoo as he stood by me:

"Can't you signal her?"

He nodded and I immediately answered:

"Very well. Do it. Tell them I want Hassim."

He went away, and pretty soon came back and pointed to half past two on his watch. It was then just a quarter to two.

"Do you mean Hassim will be here then?" I asked.

Dundoo nodded and smiled more genially than he had done and I began to feel sorry I had shaken him.

"Look here," I said, "I'm sorry I shook you just now; you have your orders to obey, and I was wrong. Please excuse me. I was hasty."

The old man looked at me in a curious sort of way and his white mustache curled ever so slightly.

Then he drew himself up and salaamed so low at the end of the gesture, that I thought he was going to prostrate himself at my feet.

But after that he remained as he had remained before, impassive as a bronze statue, beside me.

I turned the glass on the Phantom and saw that she had come to anchor and that a boat was leaving her.

I watched the boat reach the dock and saw that two mounted men, were coming full speed up the street in my direction.

At first I could only see them as two dots moving more rapidly than others, but as soon as they left the street and gained the high-road I distinguished that they were horsemen and from the way in which they came on it was clear that they were riding hard.

I took out my own watch and timed them as they came on.

They left the port of Batavia at five minutes to two and at twenty-nine minutes after I saw that it was Vanderdecken and Hassim, riding full speed on horses white with foam, into the park before the house.

Immediately I hurried down-stairs to meet them, and they pulled up before the doorway and leaped off.

Mr. Vanderdecken was as calm and impassive after his ride as if he had come by rail, but Hassim's dark face was bathed in sweat, and he staggered a little as he followed his chief whose first question was:

"Well, is she worse? Dundoo signaled us."

"No," I said, watching Hassim, "but I need you."

I saw the Malay's face assume a look of great relief, but Vanderdecken frowned slightly and said:

"Dr. Peters, I promised to be here before midnight and I am ten hours before my promise owing to that signal. You had no right to make it."

"I am the judge of that," I said firmly. "I wished to see Mr. Hassim, to ascertain if he is able to lose more blood. If he is, I need it now, as quickly as possible."

"I repeat, sir," said Vanderdecken, sternly, "that you have signaled me unnecessarily and disturbed my affairs. Now get through with Hassim at once for you cannot have him again."

"Very well," I said, "let him follow me and don't you come with him, if you don't want to kill my patient."

The man uttered an impatient "Pshaw," and turned away, but he permitted me to take Hassim up-stairs with me to the sick-chamber, where I found my patient sleeping in the same heavy, muttering way and I whispered to Hassim:

"Are you ready?"

He nodded, with his eyes on the bed.

"Sit down then," said I, and I told Sister Angela to get ready and send Inez away, for the girl had begun to tremble at the preparations and I saw she was no use to me, but rather the reverse.

To cut the matter short, I performed a second transfusion of about four ounces of good healthy blood into Mamie Bruce's veins and had the pleasure of seeing her delirium vanish like magic while a quite natural sleep replaced it.

Then I turned to look at Hassim and found that the man I thought so stout and strong had

fainted dead away under the second blood-letting and lay back in the chair, unable to move.

I brought him to at last with some very strong spirits of ammonia, and he stared round stupidly, and began to talk *English* as well as I could.

"Where—what's the matter?" he said.

Then his eyes fell on my face, and in one moment it flashed over me who he was, and what a blind idiot I had been.

Mr. Hassim was Mungo Johnston, with his face stained yellow, his hair dyed black, and dressed up in the Malay toggery.

For one instant I felt a spasm of jealous revulsion, and then I'm glad to say I put out my hand and said:

"You've saved her life twice. God bless you. I'll keep your secret, for I believe you have a reason now."

His eyes met mine, and he clasped my hand weakly, but said nothing.

Then his glance turned on the bed where lay sleeping the woman we both loved, sleeping peacefully.

A spasm of intense pain crossed his face, and he took up one of her little hands and kissed it softly with a choking sob, suppressed instantly.

That done, he rose out of his chair, rather unsteadily, and held out his hand to me for the second time with a gesture there was no mistaking.

It was a gesture of farewell.

"What," said I, "are you going away? Surely, man, not yet. You've lost ten ounces of blood in two days, and you're not fit to resist malaria."

He shook his head, and pointed out seaward, as if to indicate where he was going.

"But you'll be back soon, won't you?" asked I. "Surely he won't keep you a slave forever."

Again he shook his head mournfully, and said, in Malay, which he knew I understood a little:

"Perhaps never. Good-by."

He went back to the bed as if to take a last look, and bent down once more to kiss Mamie Bruce's hand. On my word, I felt at that moment that he was a better man than I, and was sorry from the bottom of my soul for him.

I think he must have seen this in my face, for he shook hands once more, and looked as if he was bidding me a cordial farewell.

And then he left the room and I heard him going down the corridor alone.

I saw that my patient was comfortable and I went out after him but he was gone.

I ran down-stairs to the front steps just in time to see him and Vanderdecken mounting fresh horses. Evidently they were going back again and I knew that Johnston was in no fit condition to ride far and fast.

I ran to the steps and shouted:

"Mr. Vanderdecken, one moment."

He turned in his saddle with his impassive face, saying:

"Well, what is it? I am in a hurry, sir."

"That man's not fit to gallop seven miles now," I said. "He has just fainted from loss of blood."

Vanderdecken turned and looked critically at the false Hassim, who was trying to sit up straight in his saddle and swaying from weakness.

His brows contracted in a slight, peevish frown and then he called out to his grooms in Malay:

"Tie him in his saddle. I am late."

They ran out with the slavish obedience of the true Oriental, and fastened the poor fellow in his saddle by a girdle round his waist attached to the pommel and cantel of the concern, till it was clear he could not fall off.

Then Vanderdecken turned to me, saying:

"Now, doctor, farewell. I have done all you asked. I have also left the sum of twenty thousand rupees to your credit at Vant Cott's bank, to be paid you on Mr. Bruce's order when his gra deild is recovered. You will not see me again for some time, possibly never. At the end of three years I absolve you from your promise of secrecy. On condition that you give me your word of honor as a man to keep it till then, I will relieve you of Dundoo. Are you satisfied?"

"I am," said I coldly. "I have no further need to ask questions. I know who it is sits in the saddle by you."

His eyes glowed as he asked:

"Has he told you?"

"No. I have had my eyes opened, that's all."

"Then see that you keep your lips shut, or it will be worse for all concerned. Good-day."

And with that the two horses dashed away at the same reckless speed at which they had come, and I saw that Johnston was only kept from falling by the cords that tied him in the saddle.

I confess, as they disappeared in the distance, I could not help a gloomy presentiment that I should never see one at least of them again. I felt more gloomy than I did when poor Johnston left as in the raft to go off to that cursed hocus pocus ship that had dogged us in the Spindrift in such a queer way.

I had never believed in phantoms, but I did begin to believe most devoutly in evil spirits

getting into men's frames, for certainly this Vanderdecken, with all his smooth ways, was a perfectly pitiless demon of cruelty when he wanted to be, and I had no longer any doubt that the Flying Dutchman, as Captain Hutton called it, was his yacht, got up in some hocus-pocus fashion to deceive people and practice on their superstition.

But if so, what was his object? How did he disguise his ship? What did he want with Mungo Johnston? What was the necessity with him of keeping so many secrets, and being ready to sacrifice any number of lives to keep them from the world?

Frankly, I cannot answer these questions any better to-day, after the lapse of three years, than I could that day when I saw this mysterious man disappear.

Who and what he was, how he came to be playing the Flying Dutchman in the Indian Ocean, are things that some one else may find out. I probably never shall.

They remain to me an unsolvable mystery.

Well, I have not much more to say, seeing that I have only been asked to write what I know about the Flying Dutchman, and I've told that.

Still, as a matter of professional pride, I must give an outline of what followed with regard to the girl I had snatched twice from death with Johnston's help.

From the day of that second transfusion of blood Mamie Bruce continued to improve more rapidly than I had any reason to expect, and in a week she was able to talk freely and rationally.

Then I learned from her lips much of what had transpired on the Phantom, and found the poor girl settled in the belief that her cousin's spirit had visited her to announce the coming of the fever that had so nearly carried her off.

I didn't attempt to reason with her on the subject, for I saw that it would only agitate her, and my lips were still sealed by my promise to Vanderdecken.

Moreover, I will confess that, in my selfishness, I was not sorry she should think her cousin dead, for it was clear that, in spite of his plain face, the manner of his behavior had impressed her imagination very strongly, and that she had idealized him into a hero to be adored.

And when I remembered how his blood was really in her veins, and thought of the many subtle physiological influences that we cannot explain proceeding therefrom, I knew that I should have no chance if she once knew what he had done for her.

But I had no chance anyhow. I saw that as soon as she got well. She didn't laugh at me and despise me as she used to do, but to her I was now only her doctor and very good friend—nothing more.

Meantime my practice continued to prosper in Batavia, and I was making money fast enough to set up quite an establishment and go into society.

Dutch heiresses were thrown at my head, half-breeds included, with great liberality, and one bouncer, with the euphonious name of Barbara Van Boem, was assigned by the verdict of Batavia gossip as certain to be Mrs. Sam Peters in six months.

She never was and never will be. I got tired of Batavia the day old Bruce took his granddaughter away with him to continue the trip round the world they had started to make in the Spindrift, and I made up my mind to grub money and nothing else till I got enough to go back to Yankeeland.

Yes, she went, and I own my heart went with her, so that I was pretty grumpy for some time after.

I guess I had been two years in Batavia, living pretty close, when I saw Denyse one day, looking well and hearty, and he told me he had a ship of his own now, a steamer too, and was going back home from Yokohama, by San Francisco, to get married.

"To whom?" asked I, scowling at him, for I knew how sweet he had been on Mamie.

He laughed quite comfortably, and told me:

"Why, you ought to know her well, for I used to think you were sweet on her yourself."

"Whom do you mean, Denyse; Mamie Bruce?"

He colored up quite deeply, and replied, hastily:

"No, no; my God, man, no; that's different. She's an angel from heaven now. No man would dare to think of talking marriage to her."

"Why, where have you seen her?" I asked, hastily.

"In New York city, whence I came this voyage."

"And was she well and happy, Denyse?"

"Well? Yes. Happy? I don't know. I think we were both mistaken, Peters, and she really loved her dead cousin. She broods on him all the time."

"Dead cousin? How do you know he's dead?"

"Oh, he must be by this time, or he would have come back, Peters. But you don't ask whom I'm to marry."

"Well, who is it?" I asked, not caring much who.

But the fellow fairly lifted me off my feet by saying:

"Your uncle's widow, Mrs. Peters."

"My uncle's widow?" I gasped. "What, is he dead?"

"Yes; didn't you know it? He died over a year ago on the way to San Francisco. I had the command of the ship, and I never felt so sorry for any one in my life as I did for that poor young widow, all alone."

"So you comforted her," I said, sarcastically. "That's right, Denyse. Widows need comfort, and they're apt to get it when they have money."

"Money?" he echoed. "Why that's the worst of it. Don't you know?"

"Know what?"

"That she only has her dower right, and that the old man died intestate. Why, I never dreamed of this, Sam. I thought you knew. Agnes has written letter after letter to tell you."

"Perhaps she has," said I, dryly, "but I never got them."

The fact was, I knew my respected aunt by marriage too well to fancy she'd write to me, when it was a question of a few more years' enjoyment of income. I guess she trusted to luck to have me die of fever.

All I know is that I took passage in Denyse's ship for home, selling my practice for a song.

Denyse can have his Agnes. I'm going to have my share of the cash. Amen.

SAM'L F. PETERS, M. D.

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PART IV.

THE WIDOW'S STORY.

CHAPTER I.

THE TROUBLES OF A LONE WOMAN.

I HAVE been asked to write down what I think about the Flying Dutchman of 1880. The poor doctor used to chuckle when I talked of it as a "spirit ship," and tell me there were no such things.

But then the poor, dear man was, after all, only a blind materialist, and could not penetrate the mysteries to which I have had the privilege of access, thanks to the wonderful powers of that most gifted of mediums, Mr. Booster. And I know the doctor has changed his opinions since he has crossed to the other side.

I have conversed with him quite frequently through Mr. Booster, and have received more than one spirit message in his own hand, written in the dark with a piece of slate pencil half an inch long.

Therefore I fully believe the Flying Dutchman of 1880 to be the materialized spirit of some unhappy ship, and that one of our party, unknown to us all, was a very powerful medium.

The identity of that person can hardly be doubted. The spirit ship never appeared save when Mr. Mungo Johnston was with us, and it vanished and never came back after his disappearance.

Therefore I have never had the slightest doubt on the subject since my acquaintance with Mr. Booster.

I confess, at the time of the appearance, I was frightened—being then in the slavish bonds of materialism—not to say superstitious. But now—now I have no fears, no doubts.

I belong to the select few who have the privilege of knowing, and therefore have no hesitation in pronouncing the Flying Dutchman a materialized spirit produced by Mr. Johnston, or rather produced by the spirits through the aid of Mr. Johnston, using the spiritual particles of his frame to produce the appearance.

I remember well his peculiar *mediumistic* eyes, and his impassive calmness in the most trying physical dangers.

I have no doubt that he was conscious of his own powers and used them for his purposes, as many unprincipled mediums do. I should not have wondered to hear of him going about the country some day "exposing spiritualism," as they call it, by the aid of his own natural gifts, and pretending they are merely the result of tricks.

I have known this done by these unprincipled mediums.

Unprincipled I fear he must have been, or he could never have been attracted by that selfish little lump of affectation Mary Bruce, with her doll's face and pretended baby manners, when I know she must have been twenty-two if she was a day at the time she said she was sixteen. But men generally are more or less of fools; though, if a woman of culture gets a fair chance to show them the superior attractiveness of æsthetic and spiritual natures, with no doll babies to draw them aside to frivolities, why—well I won't say any more. Of course I shall always revere the memory of the poor, dear doctor; but it's very hard for a woman to live alone, especially since the undutiful, not to say outrageous, conduct of my late husband's nephew, Samuel, who had received so much purely disinterested kindness from me.

But I might have expected it. Samuel once

pretended to like music, but it was of a low order, and he made *odious slang remarks*, even in the old days, whenever I played anything *classic*, and used to prefer "The Blue Danube," or "Nancy Lee" to the gems of Wagner or Liszt.

It was a terrible blow, my losing the doctor; but dear Captain Denyse was so, so kind and gentle, I could not help *loving* him for it, and he was one of those once inveigled by that artful little thing, and so it came about. I hope we shall be happy. Certainly there is less disparity of age than there was between me and the poor doctor. I am twenty-five and Clarence is thirty, and Clarence is *such an æsthetic name*.

Mary Bruce and her grandfather arrived in New York, after I was over the first grief of my widowhood, and she came to see me soon after.

I was surprised to see how changed she was. All her baby beauty had gone, and she was pale and serious, trying the Madonna style, which does not become these washed-out blondes. She was in deep mourning, as she *told me, for her cousin*; but I could hardly believe *that*, when I remembered how she used to treat him on the Spindrift.

I can't deny that black became her; but I think the airs she put on were too hypocritical for anything. I took occasion to tell her how *kind Captain Denyse* had been to me, and she said:

"Poor Denyse! Ah, Mrs. Peters! how his name calls back the terrible, terrible past! Was he well, poor fellow, and happy? Oh, how I hope so!"

I felt enough provoked to say:

"Yes, he was! He is a captain now, and, when he returns from his next voyage, I have promised to marry him."

She started, and looked at me earnestly, and then said:

"Oh, Mrs. Peters! how thankful you ought to be! He is a good, noble man. I hope you will be happy!"

I knew she must be bursting with envy, and trying to hide it under a show of kindness—so I said:

"I don't know about being *thankful*, Miss Bruce. I suppose *you* might think so, to be sure. My Clarence is well enough. He adores me, and I don't intend to let him know whether I care for him too much."

She replied slightly, and said, in a thoughtful way:

"How strange things come round! I'm so glad he is going to be happy!"

"And you," I said—"I suppose you have had hundreds of adorers, since you flirted so hard on the Spindrift. It's time you were thinking of getting married."

Her eyes filled with hypocritical tears, as she said:

"Ah, Mrs. Peters! I shall never get married!"

"Oh, nonsense!" I said. "They all say that. Let a nice fellow come along, and you'll jump at him—like all the rest."

"Do they all do that?" she asked, looking innocent. "Oh, Mrs. Peters! don't talk ill of your own sex. I'm sure *you* didn't jump at Denyse, did you?"

"Of course not," said I, and I felt my color rising at her impudence. "But then I'm not in the same category with young girls now. I'm an old woman, I suppose *you* think."

"Oh surely not," she answered. "Your nephew told me that you were not thirty, when you married the poor doctor."

"No, nor yet, I thank you, Miss Bruce. I was twenty-five on my last birthday. My nephew by marriage has a great deal of assurance to discuss my age. When did he tell you this?"

"Oh, a long time ago, in Batavia," she said absently. "I was very ill there, you know; and he saved my life. Ah, he is a splendid doctor, Mrs. Peters; so kind, so skillful, and so gentle and considerate. I shall never forget dear Doctor Sam."

"Hem," I said, "I wonder you don't marry him."

She shook her head sadly.

"No, no, I shall never marry. My heart is in the deep, deep sea, where *he* lies sleeping forever. Ah, had I only known then what I know now!"

And her eyes filled with tears again, so that I began to think the little thing had some real feeling in her, even if it was perverted.

So I said to comfort her:

"Well, well, my dear, you'll get over that. First loves are never deep ones. Some day you'll marry Sam Peters, very likely, and it will be all right. Have you heard from him lately? He never condescends to write to me."

She looked up at me in her artfully innocent way.

"Why, hasn't he written to you? He is coming home in a few weeks."

"How do you know?" I asked; for I began to shake inwardly, when I remembered what odious beings *lawyers* are, and how hateful Sam could be, if he wanted.

"Why, he wrote to grandpa, saying he was

coming to attend to his uncle's estate, and that he was coming by way of, Yokohama and San Francisco in Captain Denyse's ship," she answered, opening her eyes wide. "I thought you knew. The letter came by the other route, and grandpa says they ought to be here in about two or three weeks, at furthest. There was something about lawyers in the letter too, though grandpa wouldn't tell me what. But it had your address in it, and I was very glad to find you out."

Here was nice news to come to me from that little chit! I could have *slapped* her, when she talked of being *glad to find me out*. As if I didn't know she came to spy out the land for Sam, with an eye to him, now he was the *doctor's heir*. I managed to keep my control till she'd gone, and then I went down to my own lawyer, and took his advice. He had not known; the doctor and I had never told him about Sam being a nephew. I had simply administered my husband's estate, as he would have wished me, *I know*, had he not put off making a will, like the careless old man he was. When my lawyer heard the facts, he put on a very grave face, and told me I should have to give up all the landed estate but a life interest on one-third, and he recommended me not to fight Sam, but give up all, and trust to his generosity.

I was inclined to do this from one thing. Sam was coming home with Clarence, and I had no doubt they were fast friends. I *knew* I had my sailor boy fast enough, and I expected he would soften down Sam, before they got here.

I had told Clarence all sorts of fibs about writing to Sam, and I resolved to stick to it. What's the use of a fib, if you don't stick to it?

I was uneasy enough, however, as the time drew near for them to come, and I don't think I could have stood it much longer, if I had not thought of going to Mr. Bruce's, to find out what Sam had written him *about me and a lawyer*.

I went, and asked for the old gentleman, who received me with great civility, and began to talk about the doctor at once. He seemed to remember him very kindly, and talked of him with interest. The old man looked a good deal aged since I saw him last, and it was plain that Miss Mary—I never *would* call her *Mamie*—ruled him with a rod of iron, though she played gentle to perfection. His eyes followed her everywhere, and I had to tell him I wanted a private interview, before she took the hint and left us.

CHAPTER II.

CYRIL ADOLPHUS.

I TOLD Mr. Bruce how much hurt I was at Samuel's silence, after all my letters, and how very anxious I was to get rid of the terrible responsibility of the poor doctor's estate.

The old gentleman fell into the trap at once, and made a clean breast of everything. Sam had sent him a letter, asking him to employ a lawyer, and Mr. Bruce was hesitating what to do when I came in to see him. He seemed to be delighted to get it off his mind, when I told him lawyers were not needed in the matter, and he agreed to recommend an amicable settlement as soon as he saw Sam.

"And he'll no be hard on ye, Mistress Peters," he said. "Doctor Sam's a gude lad, a very gude lad, and he's unco fond of my Mamie, God bless her! Time was I didn't troost him; but the East has made a mon of him, and I'd be glad if I thought Mamie wad tak' kindly till him."

"No fear of that," said I. "He's rich now, and they say like goes to like. Mary likes him, I'm sure."

"D'ye think sae, do ye?" the poor old man said. "Ah, I'd be blithe to think it; but I fear me it canna be. The lassie thinks of puir Mungo Johnston, and aye she thinks, aye she weeps. No, no, I fear me, it wunna be. Puir lad, puir lad. We'll ne'er see him mair, I fear me."

"Of course not, if he's dead," I couldn't help saying. "Do you doubt his death, sir?"

He sighed heavily and rambled on: "Times I think it, times I doot it. 'Tis a hard world, Mistress Peters. Ye ken it, as I do. We're both nae sae young as we were, though you're a mere bairn to me. I dinna ken. 'Tis all I can say about it."

I came away feeling better. If Sam was really in love with Mary Bruce, and I kept on the right side of the girl's grandfather, Sam would have to be reasonable and generous to me. After all, I could put him to considerable trouble, as all the doctor's property was in houses, and the rents were being paid regularly to me.

I called again next day and made myself as charming as I could to Mary, without talking any business. I staid to dinner, and made up a party to visit the art galleries next day with her. I was determined to make the best of my time while I had it.

It seemed as if all our old Spindrift people were coming together very soon; for, the very next day, who should turn up but the Hyatts, with that cub, Cyril Adolphus, changed by travel into the most insufferable puppy I ever saw.

He was full of Paris and Rome, and all sorts of places, and he interlarded his talk with little scraps of bad French and Italian, while

his ignorant old mother sat by and listened, with a look of intense pride and satisfaction on her fat face, showing what a wonder she thought him.

I took an opportunity to ask him if he still remembered the raft, after the wreck of the ship; and the puppy positively grinned, as if *he* had any cause to be proud of the memory.

"Oh, yaas," he said, with his ultra English drawl, "I wemember it vewy well, Mrs. Peters. By-the-by, you wemember young Johnston, don't you, the wed-headed fellow that went off after that queer ship?"

I confess I was shocked. I didn't like Mary Bruce; but I knew she had a real feeling for her cousin, and she was a woman after all.

So I said, as slow and distinct as I could make it:

"Mr. Hyatt, you seem to forget that you are talking of Miss Bruce's cousin, for whom she is in mourning."

The young man turned red, but seemed to be struggling with a feeling of astonishment, more than shame, for he stammered out:

"I—I'm sure—I beg your pardon. Wouldn't hurt Miss Bruce's feelings for the world; but—ah—did you say *in mourning*?"

"Yes; can't you see it?" said I, angrily. "You ought to know better than to talk so rashly."

Hyatt's color faded away into white, and he rose from his chair, the picture of terror.

"Did you say *mourning*?" he repeated. "Do you weally mean to say he's *dead*? Are you *sure*?"

"Of course we are," said I, positively. "Didn't he go off; and wouldn't he have come back if he had been alive? Of course the poor fellow's dead."

Hyatt uttered a low groan, echoed by his mother, and the worthy lady cried out—screamed I mean:

"Oh, my good lands, Cyril Adolphus, the man was right. You seen a ghost, so you did. You're a doomed boy. It's a warnin'! Oh, my lands!"

Old Bruce had started up in his chair, and now he said sharply, more sharply than ever I heard him speak, to Mrs. Hyatt:

"Tut, tut, woman! haud yer claver. Are ye daft, or wad ye drive ither folks daft? Young mon, tell me what ye mean. Hae ye seen Mungo Johnston, and where?"

Cyril Adolphus pulled himself up enough to say:

"In Paris, sir, with Lord Teviot. At least I thought it was he. He is changed very much, but—"

Here Mamie Bruce—yes I *will* call her Mamie—uttered a low cry, and was sinking from her chair, when I ran and caught her, saying:

"Look up, child, look up! He's not dead, I tell you. Look at your grandfather."

The words recalled her to herself, in anxiety for the old man. *He* was trembling violently, and looking at *her*, murmuring:

"My bairn, my bairn, God be thanked! I can tell ye all now. The lad's free frae the service of that cauld, cruel de'il. He was na dead when ye thoct him sae; but God anely kens how he's fared since. Eh, Mungo, my puir, puir laddie! Gin I could see ye but once mair, I could close my auld eyes in peace."

And, Mamie, with a wild scream, rushed to the old man's arms and cowered there, sobbing violently, and repeating:

"Alivel alive! and you never told me. Oh, my God, how can I bear it?"

I was crying myself like a baby. I couldn't help it. I didn't like the girl. I thought her artful, designing, everything bad; but I couldn't feel for her at that moment. It made me think of Clarence, and I forgot all about everything else. I even think I could have offered my hand to Samuel, if he had come in just then.

Poor Mamie sobbed awhile, and Cyril Adolphus looked more like a fool than ever, till I made a sign to his mother to go away with him, for one doesn't like a young man to be prying about, and I thought the child was going into hysterics.

But as they were getting out of the room, with more tact than I had given them credit for, old Mr. Bruce said to me, hurriedly:

"Dinna send them away, Mistress Peters, not yet. The lassie weel be better in a minute, and we hae some questions to speer, ye ken."

Then he began to soothe his granddaughter, as if she were a baby, and got her calmed down at last, when we placed her in a chair, and she whispered:

"Ask him all, Mrs. Peters, please. I know you don't like me—I was very rude to you once—but you're a woman—forgive me. Ask him."

I gave her a little hug. Yes, I own it. The girl had conquered me. I felt as if I could almost *like* her, after a time. I saw Mr. Bruce was too much agitated to ask any questions, and it certainly was necessary to ask them.

So I said to Cyril Adolphus:

"Tell me, please, as near as you can, how you saw Mr. Mungo Johnston."

He seemed relieved at being asked to talk, and in his earnestness he dropped his insufferable English twang and spoke more like a man than I ever heard him, while his mother kept inter-

jecting remarks to clear up matters, rather tending to confuse them.

"I am pretty sure, now you say he was not dead, that I saw him in Paris less than six months ago," said Cyril. "My mother and I were driving in the park, you know—"

"The Bore dee Boolong, Cyril Adolphus," put in his mother proudly. "You know that's where we was introduced to the Dook of Montecarlo and the Marky dee Roolett. It was in the Bore we seen the young man, Mr. Bruce, ridin' in a elegant coopay with Viscomb Lord Teviot and her ladyship. Very nice lady she was, Mrs. Peters, and me and her was like sisters in the Hotel dee Londreez."

Cyril Adolphus was turning very red and pulled his mother's sleeve, a signal evidently agreed on between them, for she became silent with ludicrous abruptness and he went on:

"We had been introduced to Lord Teviot at one of the Presidential receptions, and he had been rather polite to us, when he heard we knew you, Miss Bruce. Lady Teviot asked us all sorts of questions about you, and particularly if we had heard what had become of you since you went to Batavia. She seemed to be quite anxious, for some reason, till I told her I had seen your names in the paper as passengers on the Alaska from England."

"You forget, Cyril Adolphus," again interrupted his mother. "Don't forget to tell what she said about that murdering, wicked wretch of a Dutchman, and what a time they had with him themselves."

Cyril pulled her sleeve and stopped her again. "Lord Teviot told me some very horrible things, that I don't want to repeat here, for fear of shocking the ladies, but the result of it was that he was quite civil to us in his way, though I could see he had a prejudice against Americans."

"But Johnston," I interposed. "What about him? That is the interesting point to Miss Bruce, Mr. Hyatt. I don't want to interrupt, but I think the sooner you tell us about that, the sooner will her suspense be relieved. You say you met him?"

"Yes, Mrs. Peters, in company with Lord and Lady Teviot, one afternoon. They were talking very earnestly, so much so that Lord Teviot did not see us, though we passed within six feet of their carriage, meeting them face to face."

"And how did he look?" ejaculated Mamie eagerly.

"Oh, Mr. Hyatt, was he well?"

"He looked the picture of health, and really, I must say, infinitely—that is—"

Cyril stopped, confused, and I knew what he was thinking of. Johnston, as a young man, was painfully plain. He wanted to tell us that his looks had improved, and didn't know how to say it, for fear of offending his cousin. I helped him out.

"Let me see," I said; "he promised to be a fine, powerful fellow when his beard grew out. You mean that his appearance was much improved, don't you?"

He gave a gasp of relief.

"Thank you, yes; that's just it. On my word, I should hardly have known him. He has fied out into a regular athlete. I wouldn't like to tackle him. And he has grown splendid whiskers and mustache, while his hair has darkened considerably, and his face is tanned quite deeply. I only knew him by his peculiar eyes, that seem to look through a man, as it were."

"And did he see you?" I asked.

"Oh, yes. That was how I knew it to be Johnston. Lord Teviot saw nothing. But his eyes were all the while on the move, and I saw him take us in with one of his rapid glances, and smile, as if he knew us, in a moment."

"And then, sir," interrupted Mr. Bruce, eagerly, "did ye no speak till him?"

"We were so startled—it took us so by surprise," said Cyril, "that we didn't think to stop and hail him. I confess, too, I am afraid of scenes among those aristocratic people. They are so different from us. But we turned round as soon as we could, and drove back to overtake the Teviots' carriage—"

"And we couldn't find hide nor hair on 'em," his mother put in rapidly, as if she had been bursting with eagerness, "and when we got to the hotel what should we find but his lordship and Lady Teviot had left for London in a hurry—such a hurry they had no time to pack up, but left the vally de sham to foller. And we baint seen one of 'em since, and I'm reel mad with Lady Teviot to treat me so, for her and me was jest like two sisters in the Hotel dee Londreez."

"And that is all I can tell you for certain," said Cyril Adolphus in conclusion, "and I hope you're not offended, Miss Bruce, at the way I spoke of your cousin, for, indeed, I had no idea he was more than a very distant relative. I beg your pardon sincerely, I'm sure."

He looked more like a man than I had ever seen him before, and Mamie Bruce looked at him as if she thought so, too, for she said, gently:

"You are not to blame at all, Mr. Hyatt. I am the one that has been justly punished for my own blind selfishness and frivolity in days gone by. I thank you from my heart for your story."

And then Cyril Adolphus, with a tact that showed his travel had not been all thrown away by any means, said to his mother:

"Why, dear me, mother, you forget our engagement with Mr. Banks at three, and here it's a quarter to three now. We must hurry. I'm sure Mr. Bruce will excuse us. A lawyer's appointment, sir, on the estate of my uncle James; may cost us quite a little sum to be late. Good-by, sir; good-by, Miss Bruce; Mrs. Peters, *au revoir*. Come, mother, or we shall be late."

And so swept the old lady out, talking all the time, in spite of her whispered remonstrances that "old Banks said four," while Mr. Bruce remarked:

"Eh, sirs, but the lad's nae sic a fule as I thoct. Gin he'd wark for a leeving, one might mak' a mon of him."

But Mamie Bruce only said:

"God bless him! He has seen him, and he will come to me at last!"

When I went home that evening I didn't know whether to feel glad or sorry, but finally concluded I was glad things had turned out as they had.

From that day forward I went regularly to the Bruces', and we waited with intense anxiety to hear from the lost one.

We watched the European steamers, but failed to find the names we sought in the lists of passengers. And so three weeks passed on, till one day I received a note from Mr. Bruce, saying:

"Come to our house directly. Doctor Peters is here, with Captain Denyse and the lost one."

I went as fast as I could.

The rest I leave to Clarence.

AGNES DENYSE.

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PART V.

CLARENCE DENYSE'S STORY.

CHAPTER I.

A NIGHT DUEL AT SEA.

My wife has asked me to continue the story which she began before our marriage, and has turned it over into my hands unreservedly, asking me to burn it and try to forget she ever wrote it, if I found how wicked she had been and despised her for it.

On the whole, I have concluded to let it stand as it is; for, while it reveals some weakness on the part of the writer, it confirms what I know to be a fact, that my Agnes had an excellent heart, with all her little vanities and love of ease and luxury, and was sure to come out right in the end.

The unfortunate circumstances of her early life, and the fact that she married once for money, could not quite hide her real nobility of nature; and as my wife, I feel bound to defend her from aspersion, founded on partial views of her character.

She was not my first love, it is true; but my affection for her is all the stronger because I can see her faults, and she certainly behaved nobly, as soon as she saw her duty clearly.

In order to make things clear, I must go back a little, to the time when I was first mate of the old George Washington. Dr. Samuel Peters has noted the fact that the two Danes, Nelson and Andersen, leaped overboard in a fit of delirium tremens, to swim to a strange ship, and that I found them in the calaboose at Batavia, pretty well broken down by their treatment on board the stranger. Both had been beaten severely, and the owner of the ship seems to have been a very cruel man; not above taking delight in practicing on the fears of ignorant sailors, for I found them both convinced that he was the Evil One himself and completely cowed down.

I was hardly sorry for the effects of his rough measures in one respect, that I never had any further trouble with them from rum. From being the hardest cases in the crew they became the best men I had for work, and followed me from ship to ship till I became a master and had a vessel of my own, when I made Nelson my third mate and never had a better.

In my early days of seafaring I had sometimes been inclined to doubt the advantages of education to a sailor, beyond a certain point; but, when I became a shipmaster, I reaped the benefit in many ways; and it was my education, such as it was, that finally procured me a fine steamer in the Pacific Trade, brought me my wife, and enabled me to forget completely my morbid folly of the past, when I sighed for the unattainable.

It was on the next voyage after the one in which I learned to know the true worth of my Agnes, and obtained the dear privilege of comforting her in her sorrow, that I met Dr. Samuel Peters, for the first time in two years.

I found him in Batavia, where I had left him; but he was a changed man—not entirely for the better. As an impecunious young doctor, he had been a good fellow—hot-headed, impetuous, full of conceit and real knowledge together, but generous to a fault, and enthusiastic in his calling.

As a medical man, with the largest practice in Batavia, he was cynical, suspicious, close in money matters; bitterly sarcastic, and, I could see in his manner, a thoroughly unhappy and disappointed man, at thirty-one years of age.

I felt the difference, and I think he did too. He seemed to be overjoyed at the excuse offered him by his uncle's disease to get away from Batavia, and the eagerness with which he made his arrangements to go with me convinced me that his change was apparent more than real.

Once on board the Ocean Queen, he relaxed every day from his artificial mask of selfishness, and became more like the old Dr. Sam, of the Spindrift. We renewed our old friendship, and, just as I suspected he would, he opened his heart to me on the way to Yokohama, and told me his story.

I knew it already. I had known the symptoms myself. The man was crossed in love, and that was all there was about it. I sincerely wished we had had a widow as charming as my Agnes on board the Queen to draw him from his morbid brooding over the unattainable, but as we had none, I did my best to distract him by trying to make a practical navigator of him—to small effect, I must admit. He devoured the problems eagerly enough, but he mastered them too soon to occupy him long. As soon as he could pick out the ship's place within a minute or two, he tired of it, and began the same old story again.

It was Mamie Bruce all the time, till I got tired. To be sure, she was a very sweet girl, but I could not but remember how she encouraged me once to make a fool of myself, and I felt that my Agnes was a much more suitable companion for the voyage of life to a man like me, who lives on his pay.

A slight coolness sprung up between the doctor and myself on this account, and I think, had we been ashore, we might have quarreled and parted. But a ship is a wonderful reconciler, and bad weather the best of all.

Twelve hours from Yokohama we ran into the edge of a typhoon, and the doctor behaved like a trump all through, while the storm seemed to blow his morbid ways out of him like magic.

He had become quite a good meteorologist at Batavia, and, as a matter of fact, if I had taken his advice before the typhoon, when the glass gave me no warning, I should have saved two boats stove in by the sea and a jib-boom sprung.

But that storm set him to talking of the old Spindrift after we were out of it. The Spindrift typhoon had faded from my mind in a multitude of other ships and storms; but to him it was fresh, inasmuch as he had never been to sea since that period.

Of course that subject brought up the Flying Dutchman and poor Johnston, and I began to wonder what had become of the poor fellow, and who it was that had picked him up, when Peters began to fidget, and at last said:

"Denyse, if you'll give me your word of honor not to tell a soul, I'll tell you something."

I promised of course, for I was curious.

"Johnston's alive," he said, "at least he was alive some time after that storm. I've seen and spoken to him. Where he is now, Heaven knows; I'm convinced he'll turn up yet. He's one of the noblest fellows God ever made, and one of the most unhappy."

"Why, where?" I began.

He interrupted me.

"No questions. I cannot answer them. I am bound by a promise, which, if I break, it will probably cost him his life. He's in the power of an infernal, cruel, utterly merciless villain, who values human life no more than that African king who kills his subjects for amusement, to do honor to a visitor. If it were not for that—Never mind. He'll come out all right some day, worse luck for me perhaps."

And then he got morbid and gloomy again, and took to smoking hard for the next half hour.

The typhoon had driven us a long way out of our course, though we managed to get out of the thick of it. The trouble was that we got on the wrong side, through my following the law of storms as laid down in the official storm guides, and not following Sam's advice, because I had too much pride in my profession to give in to a landsman. When I got a chance at the sun again, to correct my dead reckoning, I found we were down near the Ladrone Islands, in a part of the sea formerly infested with pirates, and by no means safe for a du sailing vessel even to-day, if she be short-handed and unarmed.

Of course, for an eighteen knot steamer like the Queen, there was no danger except from reefs, so I held my course to the northeast again, and we steamed on to make up for lost time.

I ordered a double lookout, and looked to the ship's armament, for we had plenty of small-arms on board and a strong crew.

On the next night after my observation, we had a moon, and I took advantage of Jupiter being near her, to take some lunars, and fix my position as close as I could.

It was while engaged with the sextant, with

Dr. Sam near me, moodily smoking, that I heard him suddenly say:

"By Jove there's a gun."

I had not noticed the flash, being absorbed with my work; but, as soon as I had finished and got my data down, I watched the place that he indicated to me, and saw several flashes at long intervals, that meant either lightning or guns at sea, a long way off.

The direction was nearly due south, the sky clear, and I judged, from the absence of sound, that the guns, if guns they were, must be at least twenty miles off, if not more.

Had the weather been cloudy, I could have been certain they were at least forty miles away, for clouds reflect sound a good thirty miles, but in perfectly clear weather it is different.

Anyway it was out of my course, and I didn't feel called on to go any nearer, though Dr. Sam grew uneasy, and kept looking at the flashes as we passed on.

But after we had progressed in this way for an hour, I was surprised to see that the flashes, which had been on our starboard beam, were there still, though less frequent; and that I began to hear the faint boom of unmistakable guns.

Further, it seemed as if they were working ahead, as if crossing our track, and I began to see we were likely to run into a first-class sea-fight, whether we would or not.

I began to wonder who the combatants could be. All the world was at peace as far as I knew, except Peru and Chili; and the Peruvian navy had gone by the board long before.

Besides, they couldn't be out off the Malay islands. The Japs had been making faces at the Coreans, to be sure; and the French had had a little brush with the same people, but that was all over.

I could not think it a fight. Rather it must be a ship in distress, signaling for help.

But whence her distress, and how could she move so fast if she were in trouble?

Revolving all this in my mind, I held my course, and soon found that the guns were dead ahead of me, and fired in anger.

In an hour more I came in sight of three ships, two of them steamers, firing at a third, which seemed to be sailing as fast as they could steam.

The flashes of the guns and the light of the moon, in her third quarter, showed me the sailing vessel, and I was amazed to perceive that it was the same mysterious craft that had dogged us in the Spindrift, three years before, the one that we had called, in our lack of a better name, the *Flying Dutchman*.

There it was, with its filmy sails gleaming with phosphorescent light, its ingeniously disguised hull, with the skeleton lines traced on it in pale fire; but this time there was no doubt of its substantial and unghostly nature, for the moon showed it to be a real ship, though I could not yet account for its faint, gauzy outlines.

The *Flying Dutchman*, whoever she was, seemed to be able to hold her own with the two steamers, for she remained about the same distance ahead, while they kept on firing at her.

I ran down within about three miles, when I sheered off, for I didn't fancy getting in the way of the guns, which were heavy rifles from the sound.

Every now and then the *Flying Dutchman* would disappear in a pitchy black cloud of smoke, but when this blew away, there she was again.

I knew the skipper must be burning Japanese day fireworks to confuse his enemy's aim and he seemed to succeed pretty well so far; for all his spars seemed to be standing.

Suddenly, while I watched, I saw a rocket shoot from the side of the *Flying Dutchman*, not going up, but skipping over the sea horizontally, and making straight for one of the steamers.

I saw it strike her, and then came a fearful explosion.

When the smoke cleared away, I saw the steamer keeled over to one side, and beginning to settle in the water, while her consort ceased firing, and went down to her relief as fast as she could.

"A rocket float torpedo," said Doctor Sam at my side.

"The confounded, merciless devil! He has sunk her."

"Merciless, do you call him?" said I, surprised. "What would you have him do? I'll swear they were not showing him much mercy."

"Ah, you don't know him as I do," he said hurriedly.

"No, no, I don't mean that. But look. By heavens she is sinking!"

There was no doubt of that. The largest steamer of the two was sinking, and that at a rate that showed me she must be an iron-clad.

You may talk about your modern science; but I don't want to be in an iron-clad when she goes down. She doesn't give one much chance.

The torpedo had struck the steamer while we looked, and in seven minutes by the watch she had gone down, and her consort lay by the place, picking up the few poor wretches that didn't go with her; for the second ship did not

get up till within a minute of the foundering of the first, and I saw more than one boat sucked down, as the ill-fated iron-clad disappeared.

And then the terrible *Flying Dutchman*—for I could see now that a terrible power lay within her—turned on her heel and went skimming off in a circle, as if waiting to see what would follow, and defying the second ship to renew the assault.

But I saw there was no danger of this. The bereaved consort, if I may call her so, lay by the place where the iron-clad went down, as if her commander had become paralyzed, and Doctor Sam began to cry excitedly:

"Good heavens! why doesn't the cursed fool get up his steam and put his head round? The devil is going to send another torpedo, and there she lies, broadside-to."

It was getting pretty ticklish for my ship now, for I saw that if I didn't get out of the way pretty soon, I might have the pleasure of a visit from the same ugly apparatus that had already sunk one ship before my eyes.

I ordered all steam on, and put ahead the best I knew how, trying to put the man-of-war between me and the *Flying Dutchman*, which was still some two miles from me.

I knew I had the heels of him, and as soon as I was out of reach of his rockets my mind became more easy as to my own ship.

But Doctor Sam was right as to the intentions of the commander of the *Flying Dutchman*, whoever he was.

I had hardly got to my distance, when I saw the fatal rocket shooting from the side of the mysterious ship, full at the broadside of the steamer.

I heard a wild screech from the steam whistle, and at the same time the steamer fired off four guns together, as if determined to sell her life dearly.

Then came the crash of the torpedo, and the bursting of the shells from the steamer's guns, together.

I saw the mainmast of the *Flying Dutchman* totter and fall, while the steamer had settled down by the bow, with her stern up in the air, showing that the torpedo had only blown open her forward compartment, and giving me a hope that she might float yet.

But not a bit of it. Even as I ordered the helm round, intending to put back to the rescue of the ill-fated ship, I saw a second rocket leave the side of the crippled and unearthly-looking stranger, strike the doomed vessel amidships, and sink her before our very eyes, while we were shuddering with horror.

Nor was this all.

I saw that we were to be attacked also, for another rocket came shooting at us, and only the fact that the ship was head on and sheered off in time to miss it, saved us from a similar fate.

We saw the rocket go hissing past us, and noticed that it was fastened on something broad and flat.

Then we got our own head round, and fled as if the devil was after us, just in time.

The rocket never exploded. We passed it, after it had spent itself in the sea, and I saw what it was.

A very large Congreve rocket had been fastened to a sort of raft, just heavy enough to hold it, and shaped so as to skim over the sea instead of cutting through it. In front of the raft was a black bulb like a shell, and Doctor Sam took a rifle as we passed and fired two shots at it.

The second struck, and we saw plain enough what it was from the effect.

A blinding flash and a sharp explosion—then—nothing! The raft had been literally reduced to powder. The black bulb was a can of dynamite.

You may judge that we did not care to cultivate any further acquaintance with the *Flying Dutchman*, but kept on till I was sure we were out of range of any more rocket floats. I had heard of the thing before, but this was the first time I had seen one, and I don't want any more.

But as soon as I was fairly out of distance, I made up my mind to know more of this murderous, piratical individual.

I had the heels of him, and I could defy him to either run me down or escape me. Whoever he was, he was a scourge to humanity, and I was determined to dog him into some port or into sight of some more men-of-war, as a public duty.

I told Doctor Sam this, and he clapped me on the shoulder heartily, saying:

"Denyse, you're a man! I'll stick by you till death. Give your orders."

Then I began to think what best to do. I couldn't trifle with the *Flying Dutchman* now I knew his means of offense. In these days of torpedoes, it's a very easy thing to sink an iron steamer.

But I was also bound to keep near the pirate—for pirate he must be—at any hazard.

I ordered the engines stopped, and fixed my glass on the *Flying Dutchman*.

There lay the ship, with her mainmast gone by the board, but with all her filmy, transparent sails still set on the two remaining masts,

still glowing with phosphorescent light. She was motionless on the gentle swell, for the wind had gone down to mere catpaws.

If it had not been for the strange light in her sails, I might have had some difficulty in fixing her with the night-glass; but as it was, I could see her plainly about three miles off.

Then it struck me to sweep the water, in case any remnant might be left of the sunken vessels, and after a long search I discovered a couple of black dots moving over the sea, which I judged to be boats, coming straight for the *Queen*, the nearest about two miles off, the other a long way behind but creeping up as if in pursuit.

I handed the glass to Peters, and told him to look and tell me what he thought.

He gazed for quite a long time, and then said:

"It is a boat, and that devil's boat is pursuing it. I think they will catch her if we don't do something to help them."

"Just what I think," said I; "but we can't help them without going within range of the torpedoes."

He made no answer, and I had a great struggle in my own mind between my duty to my employers and my duty to humanity.

I raised the glass again and saw that the rear boat was coming up with the front one, which was now not over a mile and a half away.

The glass told me that the front boat had only four oars, while the second was full of men and had out nearly a dozen.

"The man who commands that ship," said Doctor Sam, in a low, hoarse voice, "means to exterminate every one who can disclose his mystery. Denyse, I don't want you to risk your own life, but if you will give me an armed boat I'll pull out and help those unfortunate men."

His words decided me, and I called out to the men, who were all on deck, murmuring to each other:

"Men, I want volunteers to man a boat and go to the rescue of those poor fellows. Who'll go?"

There was a dead silence. I had not counted on the superstition of sailors. They were afraid.

At last Lars Nelson, my third officer, stepped out into the waist and called out:

"Captain Denyse, my ancestor, Ragnar Oleson, fought death and the devil, and so will I. I'll take the boat. Who'll follow?"

"I!" shouted his friend Andersen, and in a moment there were a score of volunteers.

The Dane had broken the spell of superstition. Five minutes later our steam launch was out, with twenty men aboard, well armed, and I saw it puffing away over the sea toward the two boats, for our launch had a boiler on the New York fire department pattern, and could get up steam in three minutes with a wood fire.

I watched them going off, Doctor Sam with the rest, and I wished I was with them, but of course I couldn't leave my ship on any such desperate errand.

I saw them near the boats, saw the flash of fire arms, and then came a rocket float from the *Flying Dutchman* in among the boats.

CHAPTER II.

THE LAST SIGHT.

DOCTOR SAM was right in taking the steam launch. She was small, swift and handy.

The rocket float missed her and all the other boats, for they could see it coming and get out of the way. It skimmed on and lay idle in the sea without exploding, while the firing of small arms from the launch became furious, and I heard a faint cheer come over the sea.

The men of the *Queen* got excited and sent back a rouser in reply, which I rather encouraged, for it showed they were getting over their silly superstition, with the ocular evidence of physical strife before them.

The spell was broken for them, and I took occasion to go forward and tell them that I knew the ship in sight to be an artful fraud, got up to deceive sailors, and that I proposed to follow her up in broad daylight, and expose her, if things went well with the launch.

They cheered again, and then we took to watching the conflict with intense eagerness.

We did not dare to go nearer with our huge ship; she was too easy a target for rockets. And while we looked the pirate fired three, one after the other, at the boats, as if determined to destroy them somehow.

The third rocket struck the foremost boat, the very one that had been the object of pursuit, and exploded within a hundred feet of the launch, as it seemed to me; when the rear boat turned round and made for the *Flying Dutchman*, which at that instant began to move toward us at a low pace.

"She must be a steamer," I said to myself. "There's no wind to move her now."

I watched the launch through the glass, and saw that it had stopped where the boat had blown up, as if the crew were searching for survivors, which I feared would be useless.

Presently the pirate yawed widely and sent a fourth rocket at the launch, just shaving it, as it appeared to me, and then I saw with great

relief that the launch was coming back puffing over the swells at full speed.

I ordered steam up to go ahead slow; for I felt convinced, from the persistence of the pirate, that I had to keep out of his range. We steamed on, just fast enough to let the little launch catch up, but it was half an hour before she was alongside, during which time the pirate sent no less than nine rockets after her, so close that the little craft had to double and twist like a hare before the dogs, to avoid being sent to kingdom come.

When she was abeam at last, I threw her a tow-line; and we went ahead full speed for a good two miles, before we dared to slow up and take her in, so hard did that persistent pirate press us, showing that he must be a steamer of very swift model, to go so fast, with all his top hamper set, and no wind.

But the Queen was more than a match for him at his best, and drew out of range long enough to hook on the falls and haul in the launch at last, with all her men in her.

Then I heaved a great sigh of relief, for I felt we were safe from pursuit.

The first thing I did was to order full speed ahead, and then I went to inspect the launch and find if any one was hurt.

Doctor Sam Peters jumped down on deck in a great state of excitement, grasped my hand, wrung it hard, and then fairly hugged me, before he said a word. His face was working with some deep emotion, and as soon as he could speak he ejaculated:

"By heavens, Denyse, I thought he had us twice, but we've beaten the infernal villain at last. We've beaten him, we've beaten him!"

"Did you save any one from the boat?" I asked, fearing his answer.

He nodded, and hugged me again, ejaculating:

"I tell you we've beaten him! By heavens I wish I was a woman, so I could have a good cry over it. Denyse, you're a trump."

He seemed almost beside himself with joy—so unlike his usual calm, cynical manner, that I wondered at him.

"What has happened?" I asked him. "Is any one hurt in the launch?"

"Not a man," he answered, delightedly—"not one. I tell you, we've beaten the cruel devil. Ask Nelson: he's a man all over, and he handled the launch like his namesake, Lord Nelson, of the Nile. Oh, Denyse! I want to go on a big drunk—I want to howl like a maniac! I'm so glad! Civilization is a fraud. I want to be a savage, and yell!"

"Well, then, yell away!" I said, shortly; "and, when you've got your senses, tell me how many you saved."

I was a little provoked at him, and was turning away to question Nelson, who had not offered to report yet, though it was his clear duty, but stood in the midst of a crowd of sailors, all jabbering away together, till the discipline of the ship looked as if it were going to the dogs. I couldn't account for it all, so unlike their usual ways.

They had some one in the midst of the crowd, who seemed to be sick or wounded—for I saw his figure lying on a stretcher held by several men; and I was pushing my way forward to find out what it meant, when Peters gave a yell, enough to make one's hair stand on end, and shouted:

"Men, I propose three cheers for the Queen, and three more for Lars Nelson! Give it to 'em good! Hurrah!"

And away they all went like mad, till I'm sure we must have been heard on board the pirate, though he was a good three miles astern.

Then Sam Peters got in front of me, and said, in a way that showed he was coming to his senses:

"Denyse, my dear old fellow, I beg your pardon; but I own I was nearly crazy with joy. As a favor to me, don't ask Nelson to report, and don't say anything sharp to the men; but come into the cabin. I want to tell you something very, very strange and providential that has happened to us to-night. I ask the privilege to be the first to tell you."

Before I answered, I took a good look astern, and saw that the Flying Dutchman had begun to burn his devilish black smoke which appeared to be lying still on the water.

"You're sure there's no one hurt in the launch?" I said doubtfully to Peters.

"Not a man, on my honor. We kept up such a fire that we drove them off."

"And you say you saved some one from the boat?"

"We did; only one, but he had a narrow escape, I tell you. For heaven's sake, Denyse, come into the cabin. I have something important to tell you. Let Mr. Roberts handle the ship till you come out. The danger's over."

I yielded to him and I have since been sorry I did.

I turned to Roberts, my first officer, and told him: "Keep that black smoke in sight, and don't go near enough for danger, but don't let it escape you."

"All right, sir," said Roberts confidently. "The blackguard sha'n't get off, while I'm on deck."

I took a last look at the black cloud, which was plain enough to be seen, brooding over the sea in the form of a dragon, keeping its shape a long time. I knew when it cleared off, we couldn't help but see the Flying Dutchman, as he could not possibly get away on the open sea.

Then I went into the cabin and Peters followed and told me what had happened.

They had come down on the boats just as the pirates had got within two cable lengths of the fugitives. There were five men in the foremost boat, who seemed to be nearly exhausted with their exertions. One of them was steering.

As they came up abeam of the fugitives the pirates in the pursuing boat uttered a yell and began to fire, not at the launch, but at the boat, and Peters saw the steersman start up and fall back, while one of the oarsmen dropped from his seat. At that minute came the first rocket and went close to the launch and still closer to the boat. Then the men in the launch opened fire and dashed in to screen the fugitives. Peters saw several men in the pirate boat drop, but she pulled straight on, never heeding the launch, as if determined on exterminating the other boat.

The next five minutes witnessed a confused struggle in which, Peters admitted, he lost his head, and thought only of sinking the pirate boat, forgetting the other.

It was ended by the explosion of the third rocket, and then they came to their senses in the launch and steamed over to the place where the boat had been blown up before their eyes.

Only one man had seen the catastrophe and that was Lars Nelson.

He swore that he saw one man dive overboard before the rocket struck as if he saw it coming and knew they could not avoid it in their crippled state. They heard the pirates yell triumphantly, saw the Flying Dutchman moving again, and knew they had no time to lose to save themselves. At that moment Lars Nelson gave a shout and leaped into the sea, swimming toward a dark object like a man's head that had just come up, not fifty feet from the launch's stern.

Peters saw him seize it; knew it must be a possible survivor of that unhappy boat, and he shouted to stop the engine and back water, so as to keep the stern of the launch still to the enemy and diminish the mark for rockets.

They had a narrow shave of it before they picked up Nelson, and while they drew him and the rescued man on board, the pirate sent two rockets at them, one of which came so close that Peters owned he trembled and sweat like a coward. I didn't wonder.

The man saved was insensible but seemed to have no wound whatever. He had been stunned by the shock of the explosion and was almost dead when Peters felt him.

Then—he told me—he turned over the launch to Nelson who handled her in the skillful way I had seen him, while the doctor set to work to resuscitate the drowned man.

"I tell you, Denyse," he said, "it was hard work to keep one's coolness and attend to the patient with that merciless demon sending his torpedoes after us, and the knowledge that if one hit us we should all be blown to atoms. The danger wasn't over after they'd passed on, either, as I knew, for if we ran over a spent one we were bound to explode it. Once I heard the crash and thought we had done so, but Lars called down to me in the cockpit that he'd done it with a bullet because he hadn't time to turn. And all that time I was working away at the poor drowned fellow, pressing in his ribs and letting them go with a spring to induce artificial respiration, and still he lay there, so still, I feared it was labor thrown away. At last I heard a cheer and the noise of your ship's crew and knew we were alongside, and still he had not moved. I knew you'd given us a tow by the jerky motion of the launch, but I'd no time to think of anything but my patient, till all of a sudden I heard him draw in his breath with that horrible choking groan that sounds so painful but makes a physician so proud. Then I knew I'd saved him and I went at him with a will, slapping him hard to restore his consciousness, now his breath had come at last. By the time he was fairly awake, you slowed up to take us in. And now, who do you think that man is, now on board the Queen?"

"I'm sure I don't know," said I, feeling excited, but hardly knowing why. "No mysteries, Peters, tell me."

He jumped up and brought down his hand on my shoulder with a slap that shook me all over.

"Why, you sedate old navigator," he shouted, "can't you see why I'm so crazy? It's MUNGO JOHNSTON, by heavens! I'm free from my pledge to that infernal old pirate, Vanderdecken, and by the Eternal, Clarence Denyse, I'll hunt him down to the gallows, if you'll help me, if we have to follow him all round the world."

I jumped up, as much excited as he was, and we hugged each other like two girls.

Then I rushed out on deck and found that he had told me the truth.

There lay the poor fellow on a cot they had made up for him on deck before the cabin door

and he knew me and held out his hand saying faintly:

"God bless you, Denyse. You and Peters have saved me from worse than death if they had caught me."

Peters wouldn't let me say much to him; for he was very autocratic in his capacity as a physician. He had him carried into the cabin and told me I'd best look after that villain Vanderdecken for fear he might escape.

I knew there was no fear of that. There lay the thick black smoke still on the sea and while that was there, I knew he couldn't be far off; though I couldn't see him. Peters seemed to know who he was, and called him Vanderdecken, which I know to be the legendary hero of the Dutch sea story, but I didn't want to ask any questions till I had my responsibility settled.

We had sighted the first flash of the guns about four bells in the first night-watch and I was surprised to hear them strike six bells soon after I came on deck.

"Surely," I thought, "we've been more than an hour in this trouble. They must have lost their heads."

I called Roberts and asked what he meant by letting the ship's bells be struck irregularly.

"Irregularly," says he, surprised, "why, sir, they're all right. It's six bells in the morning watch. Don't you see the dawn coming?"

I looked eastward, and I didn't say another word.

Roberts had kept his head better than I had. I had not noticed the lapse of time. Instead of one hour, we had been five into our fight and it was three in the morning with the sun coming.

"Now," I thought, "if I don't find out more about this pirate in broad daylight it's strange."

I waited anxiously for the dawn and it came at last. There lay the black column of smoke on the sea, but as the sun rose a smart breeze sprang up and the smoke began to bend over and drive away to the northeast.

I watched it anxiously for the spars of the pirate, but as the breeze waxed stronger and the white-caps began to show all over the sea, I began to feel my heart going down into my boots.

Not only were no spars there, but inside of five minutes from the time the sun was fairly up I became convinced that *no ship was there*.

Yet the smoke still rose thick as ever from the bosom of the sea, drifting off to leeward like a huge black plume.

I swept the horizon eagerly. Nothing was in sight. Not a speck of sail dotted the blue line, and I knew we were far out of the line of trade.

The pirate had given us the slip, and I had to make the best of it.

I looked at the men and saw that their superstitions were being roused again, so I went into the cabin and said to Sam Peters, who was dozing on a sofa:

"The pirate has gone, but there's a smoke on the sea. Ask Johnston what it means. Maybe he knows."

Peters rubbed his eyes and I had to repeat my question before he fairly comprehended me.

Then he went into a state-room and presently came out with Mungo Johnston, looking very pale, but wrapped in one of Sam's dressing-gowns and able to walk and talk.

I saw the man had improved greatly in personal appearance, owing to a very handsome beard he had grown, while his freckles had disappeared in a deep uniform tan that almost hid his paleness.

"I'll come on deck," he said to me. "Don't go near the smoke. There is no end to his stratagems, and he is bound to wipe us out if he can. I'll see what it is. I think I know."

We went on deck and he looked long and keenly at the smoke. At last he said:

"It is a raft. There is a man on it. He is feeding the fire. The Phantom has stolen away behind the smoke in the night. Has this vessel moved?"

"Not while I've been on deck. Mr. Roberts, did we move while I was below with Doctor Peters?"

"No, sir," said Roberts; and then he stammered:

"Excuse me, sir, but one of the lookouts said he thought he saw some vessel off to the south while you were below, but it was a brig, sir, with nothing unnatural about her, and I thought it could not be our craft, sir."

Mungo Johnston nodded.

"I thought so. That was the Phantom, with her mainmast gone. Denyse, you'll never see her again. It shows me that Vanderdecken has given up the game at last. You may proceed on your voyage in safety. As for him, it's no use looking for him. You would never find him, and if you did you might rue the day, as others have done."

"But who is he?" I said, impatiently. "What does it all mean?"

"Ay, ay," echoed Peters; "that's what I want to know, and he won't tell me a word, though I've brought him back to life, the ungrateful scamp."

Johnston turned toward him with a faint smile.

"You don't mean that, Peters. I know you

too well. But I cannot tell you what you wish to know yet. Bad as that man is, he has done certain things for me that compel me to keep my word to him till he cannot be harmed by my revelations. I will promise you one thing—I will tell you all when we get to New York, if—if I find a person alive in whom I take, as you know, a great interest."

Sam Peters turned away, and said, in a low tone:

"Ay, ay, Johnston, you've earned your luck. I'll say no more."

"The smoke's ceased, sir," suddenly interrupted Roberts, touching my arm. "There's a man on a little raft; looks like a Jap or Chinaman."

We looked over and saw that the smoke had driven off to leeward.

A little board float, with a large earthen pot in the center, lay rocking on the sea, and beside the pot, from which still curled the last dying wreath of smoke, stood a half-naked lascar, with his arms folded, eying our ship as calmly as if he had not been all alone in the midst of a trackless sea. I scanned him through the glass closely, and everything about him, for I feared more torpedoes.

He was a fine, muscular fellow, with a black mustache and a fierce, resolute face, set in a contemptuous scowl as he looked at us.

The float was made of about a dozen boards, nailed together, just enough to sustain him and the pot of combustibles wherewith he had been hiding his master's retreat so skillfully.

"Well," said Peters, "what's to be done with him now? Shall we leave him to perish alone? That cruel devil, Vanderdecken, will never come back for him. He has sacrificed him to save himself."

"Will you take a boat and offer to pick him up?" I asked him, for I felt a certain indefinable fear at taking the ship near even a naked lascar on a raft.

"Certainly I will," said Peters, and I let him take the launch again on his errand of mercy.

Away puffed the little vessel, and I saw her near the lascar, who remained standing, with his face set in the same scornful smile, till they were within about fifty feet, when I saw him stoop down and pick up a cord, which stretched out into the sea as if tied to something floating just under the surface of the water.

I heard Mungo Johnston scream out:

"Take care, Peters. My God, it's another torpedo!"

There came a column of white spray out of the sea, just under the bows of the launch, and the little vessel was lifted bodily half her length out of the water, falling back again, and rolling as if about to founder.

Then the wild lascar uttered a shout we could hear in the ship, plucked a knife from his girdle, before us all, and stabbed himself to the heart, falling back into the sea, stone dead, with the last curls of black smoke floating over him for a funeral pall. He had saved the Flying Dutchman's secret.

The torpedo had blown a hole in the bow of the steam launch, but luckily for the lives of her crew, the lascar pulled the trigger a second too soon, and she managed to keep afloat till we got near enough to throw a rope, hook on the falls, and save a damaged boat and a dozen badly-scared men.

As for the lascar's body it had sunk out of sight, and we saw it no more. We did not go any nearer the raft after our lesson, but steamed off to the northeast as hard as we could, to make up for lost time.

We had had enough of the Flying Dutchman and all his satellites.

All through that voyage Mungo Johnston preserved an impenetrable silence on the subject of his adventures since he left the Spindrift raft three years before to investigate the fiery stranger.

Peters could get no more out of him than I, though he tried hard and had the advantage of knowledge that I did not possess till he told me of his singular encounter with the millionaire Vanderdecken at Batavia, and how he had recognized our friend disguised as a Malay.

Evidently Johnston had suffered a singular experience which had aged him wonderfully, for he looked like a man of thirty-three or four, when I knew he could not be over twenty-five.

But all he would answer to us was:

"Wait. The time will come you shall know—not all—there is a part I can only tell to one person; but all you want to know. When I am in New York I will write out the whole story, and you can judge for yourselves who it is that has done such terrible deeds in the Eastern seas against his foes. Wait."

And we had to wait, as he said. The voyage seemed longer than usual to me on many accounts, for I was going home to be married, and I was heartily glad when we sighted the Golden Gate at last.

Two days later, Peters, Denyse and I were going East on the Overland Express at a pace too slow for our desires, and from the moment we knocked at Mr. Bruce's door, I give up the story to a man better able to tell it from the beginning.

CLARENCE DENYSE.

PART VI.

MUNGO JOHNSTON'S STORY.

CHAPTER I.

HOW I BECAME A SLAVE.

Is it a misfortune for a man to be born plain, very plain, and poor, with an active brain and a sensitive temperament, to make him more alive to his own deficiencies?

I sometimes think what I would have done had I been a handsome fellow like Sam Peters or Denyse, and rich like Hyatt. I might have made my mark early. Never mind. I was brought up in a hard school, and had to learn what I know in a way that made me value it. My only friend in boyhood was my kinsman, Mungo Bruce, and to him I can never be grateful enough; for he enabled me to go to school and college in my frugal way, till I was fit for the battle of life; and he took me into his employment in a capacity where he trusted me from the first, even while he worked me hard and paid me what some called "starvation wages."

I knew better. I could see he was testing me. We Scotch Yankees have not forgotten the traditions of our race on the other side, and we believe blood to be thicker than water. I was not surprised therefore when my kinsman suddenly advanced me from the position of private clerk, at seven dollars a week, to the head of the Batavia house, which I knew to be worth at least seven thousand dollars a year.

He wanted a man he could trust there, and if kin cannot be trusted to the remotest degree, why are we Scots Yankees born? I would have laid down my life for my cousin's interest, and he knew it. Not for money; but for holy love of kindred.

We sailed on the Spindrift, and there I first saw my cousin, Mamie. My kinsman had, up to that time, kept me in an inferior position, as was his right. I, the object of his free bounty, a mere distant relation, had no right to presume to visit his house, till I received his invitation. I was Mungo Bruce's clerk, and by no means the man to intrude my relationship where it might be unwelcome.

I had never seen my cousin Mamie till we sailed in the same ship together, and then—It is no wonder if I, her kinsman, adored her. Every man in the ship did that. I was, perhaps, the only utterly hopeless one there.

I knew she could never love a gawky, long-legged, freckle-faced fellow like me, with red hair and green eyes. I didn't hope or expect anything from her, and I was quite content to serve her for Jacob's term ten times over, without daring to hope for Jacob's reward. I craved nothing, for I knew I deserved nothing.

I was quite happy in the storm, to be near her, and help her. My only merits were my brute strength and my knowledge of the sea, acquired when I was a wandering orphan, beaten and abused before I met my kinsman, Mungo Bruce.

Such as my talents were, the Bruces had a right to use the Johnstons; and I was surprised and almost amused when Mamie thanked me on the raft, in her pretty way, for having "saved her life," as she called it.

"What would you have me do, cousin?" I asked. "Let you drown? And where would our kinship be, then?"

I don't know why it was Mamie was so kind to me on the raft. It seemed like heaven to me, when I knew how plain I was, and how every sight of me must repel her fastidious taste.

Perhaps it was that made me so reckless, leaving the raft in the way I did, and going off to find out the identity of that vessel that had dogged the Spindrift in so singular a manner.

I did it partly to shame the rest out of their superstition; but I confess that, when I was fairly out of sight of the big, comfortable raft, on my little float of two or three sticks, I began to feel a strange sensation creeping over me. Try as I would, the weird stories of that imaginative Dane haunted me, and I began to think of all the ghost legends my old nurse used to tell me (in the days when even I had a nurse) about Highland wraiths and Irish banshees, as I slowly swept the water with my oar, paddling silently on into the emptiness of the sea, with nothing visible all round me but the dark waters and that strange-looking apparition.

Of course I knew it must be a ship. I had even reasoned out to myself the way in which it was disguised.

I had heard of whole cars in underground railroads being illuminated by a coat of phosphoric paint, which shone as soon as the lights were shut off.

I reasoned that this ship must have a skeleton painted on her, which showed at night and gave her the singular appearance I saw.

But all my reasoning could not make me feel easy when I found myself alone, at last, with nothing but the fiery ship in sight.

There is something so fearful in the loneliness of the sea! If I could have seen the raft, or known exactly in what direction it lay, I think I should have gone back.

But I had lost it and become bewildered. All I could see was the fiery ship; and at last I pulled up my courage and swept on till I found myself directly in her course, and resolved to await her.

Then my heart thumped violently.

She was coming, and would probably pick me up.

But who was she, and should I be any better off afterward?

Could she be an honest ship, and if so, why this strange disguise?

I was convinced she was a steamer, from her going independent of the wind, but I could not account for the absence of smoke and noise.

However, it was too late to recede. I even was fearful she might miss me, in the dark, as she had the other raft.

Filled with the fever of an unconquerable curiosity, I drew out a match as I saw her yawing again, and struck it so as to show a blaze.

Instantly she laid her head for me, and came on straight as an arrow.

The last flicker of the little flame expired, and I dropped the spark in the sea, where it went out with a slight hiss, as if jeering at my folly in calling the stranger.

Then I was right under her bows, and saw the dark hull and spars under the fiery skeleton, traced thereon, as I had expected in phosphoric paint.

I saw, too, the cause of her filmy spectral look, and the fiery transparency of her sails.

They were made of network, which offered no resistance to the wind, and the network was coated with the same phosphoric covering.

Then she swept past me in silence, the water hardly rippling, and I saw the cause of that silence.

She was going at low speed, and had cloths towing round her cut-water and sides, which absorbed the sounds to a great extent.

And all these discoveries, while they amazed me, filled me with a certain amount of fear.

Why should an honest ship sail the seas in such an uncanny guise?

I was like to discover soon, perhaps to my cost.

Already it was too late to recede. She swept past me within twenty feet, and I saw figures moving on her rail, and heads peering over.

Then came a glare of light in my eyes, as a powerful reflecting-lamp was turned on me, and I made a virtue of necessity and hailed her.

"Ship ahoy!" I cried. "What ship's that?"

A clear, melodious voice called out an order in Malay, which I had studied from books for the last two years, on purpose to fit me for the care of the Batavia house.

The voice cried:

"Stop and back the ship! Steady! Stop!"

The ship lay motionless by me, and I saw, in the glare of light, a tall, handsome man, in an Oriental dress, looking at me.

Then he said in excellent English:

"Who are you?"

"A shipwrecked man, who asks help," I said.

"What is the name of your ship?" he asked.

"The Spindrift," I answered.

The man smiled.

"Aha, I thought so. You have been wrecked. What was that light I saw?"

"The fire on our raft. We have fourteen souls there, with four women. If you are a man, help us."

"Is Lord Teviot on your raft?" he asked coolly, not heeding my appeal.

"Lord Teviot? Who is he?" I said in my astonishment. "I never heard of him."

"You lie," he retorted, sternly. "You are a spy. I'll show you I'm not to be made a fool of."

He turned to his men and said in Malay:

"Bring him on board. I will question him and find out."

I did not know what to do. I could not escape; for I was in full view, and had only a sluggish raft.

"Throw me a rope," I cried. "I am an honest man. I'm willing to answer any questions."

"I'll see you do," he said coldly.

Then they threw me a rope, and I was hauled in to the mysterious vessel; climbed her side and stood on the deck under an awning of silk, most magnificent to see, surrounded by a crew of swarthy Malays and lascars, in rich Oriental dresses, with the chief eying me sternly.

Such a face I had never seen before. It had the cold impassive dignity of an Egyptian statue, exceedingly handsome, rounded in outline, but as hard as a stone.

I felt that I was before a man who would order my death by torture as coolly as he would eat his dinner.

He eyed me from head to foot, his wild crew standing round like bronze statues.

"Now tell me the name of your ship," he replied, "and if you lie to me, I will roast you in the engine furnace."

I answered:

"My ship, sir, as I told you was the Spindrift of New York, property of Bruce, Hilton & Co., bound to Batavia for coffee. We were caught in the vortex of the typhoon, and the vessel

foundered. Your ship passed us just before the storm struck us. We made a raft of the spars and saved one life-boat and all of the passengers. We saw you again, last night, and I would have signaled you, but the captain's superstition prevented it. He thought you were the fabulous Flying Dutchman. To-night I resolved to put off to you, after I found the superstition of captain and sailors bid fair to expose us to death. I felt sure this was a real ship. That is all."

He listened like a statue, and asked:

"The names of your survivors—quick!"

I gave them all, and he stood looking at me, as if debating what to do. At last he said, in his low, musical tones:

"I regret that I have made a mistake. Your ship is not the one I thought her. I am sorry you are here. You seem to be a brave and sensible person, too much so to be left at large after what you have seen. Are you a Christian?"

"I hope so," I answered, bewildered.

"Very good. I give you five minutes to say your prayers. To a Mohammedan, I give ten, to a Buddhist fifteen, to an Englishman thirty-five seconds."

"What do you mean?" I asked, with a vague fear, as I looked at his face.

"Simply that it is necessary for me to kill you at once," he said, quietly. "I am sorry to do it, for I am not devoid of feeling, but it must be done."

"And why?" I asked, desperately. "What have I done? Who are you, to take a life God has spared? Are you a man, or a devil in man's shape?"

He smiled as coldly as before, saying:

"Young man, do not make me despise you. Any one of my men here would kill himself if I ordered it, and you pretend to belong to a superior race, as they call it. Are you afraid to die?"

"No," I answered him, "I am not afraid to die, but you have no right to take my life. It is unjust. I have done nothing to harm you. I have come off to you to save other lives at the risk of my own. If you kill me, you are a monster of needless wickedness, and God will punish you for it. I suppose you mean that you will also murder those poor creatures on the raft, and imbrue your hands in the blood of helpless women. If you do I tell you you are a coward!"

He listened as impassively as ever, and then turned to his men, saying indifferently:

"Tell Ismay Baba to come and strike his head off. I am tired."

He spoke in Malay, and I answered in the same tongue as bitterly as I could:

"Better do it yourself. Strike me in the throat and see if I flinch, coward."

My first word made them all start, and I heard a murmur among the Malays, while the chief asked me, hurriedly:

"Where did you learn Malay?"

"In America, from books," I answered coldly. "What matter? Go on and play the butcher. I cannot resist."

He held up his hand to his men.

"Tell Ismay Baba to wait. I will call him when I want him."

Then to me in English:

"Come into my cabin. I must question you further."

"I answer no questions," said I, shortly. "If I am to die, kill me."

"Will it induce you to answer my questions if I tell you I may save your life under certain conditions?" he asked, coldly. "Mind, I am not anxious. Your death is the easiest way out of my present dilemma. One thing I will tell you to reassure you—I do not kill needlessly. Your friends on the raft are safe from me. I may even help them by sending a prahu after them."

"If you mean that," said I, "I will answer your questions. I have told you my own life is valueless to me; but theirs I wish to save if I can."

He bowed his head slightly, and said:

"You are a brave, and may be a useful man. Follow me."

I followed him into the most gorgeous cabin I ever beheld in my life, decked with a luxury to which our finest yachts are meanly plain, and he called out in Malay:

"Bring food and wine."

Into the cabin trooped five or six young Hindoo girls, graceful as fawns, attired as richly as every one else on board this mysterious vessel, and set down silvers of fruit and silver pitchers of wine on an ivory inlaid table of Chinese work.

Then the chief said to me:

"Are you hungry or thirsty?"

"I am both," said I; "but I take no food while my friends are in want."

He waved his hand slightly.

"I have not said eat and drink. When I do, if you are wise you will obey, for you will remember Oriental customs, and know that you are my guest and sacred from harm at my hands. Now I am about to question you. On your answers it will depend whether I say to you 'eat,' or call Ismay Baba. What is your name?"

I told him, and he began a rigorous cross-examination on my personal history, whence I came, how I had lived, my family, my education, and what I knew.

On the last point he was minute to a degree that amazed me, for I found that this man was a splendid mathematician, a seaman, a linguist, Oriental and European, well read in a dozen lines of science, a chemist, electrician, and a most acute reasoner.

I had graduated from Columbia College with honors, and thought myself well read, but this strange man knew it all and much more, too. When I had finished at last he said to me:

"You are the man I want. My Malays and lascars are not navigators, and have no brains to comprehend the duties of my first officer. If I give you your life, will you become my lieutenant and swear to obey me in all things?"

"No," I said firmly. "I have other duties to my kinsman, and I cannot exile myself from civilization to be any man's slave. I am flattered and grateful for your offer. It is a compliment from a man of your great attainments; but I have a duty to my cousin."

"Ah," he interrupted, briskly. "I see you fear hard service and poor pay. You do not know me. In civilization I am a millionaire of Java, with a respected name. As my assistant, you may command luxury and wealth unbounded. If you serve me well for three years, I will make you a richer man than the whole house of Bruce, Hilton & Co. I know it well. My house in Batavia overlooks the stores of that firm. I have dealings with them. They are my factors for two of my coffee plantations. Mr. Johnston, you are throwing away, not only your life, but a splendid opportunity to make your fortune in three years."

I was astounded.

"What is your name in civilization?" I asked him, "and who are you here?"

He smiled (and when he chose he had the most fascinating smile I ever saw.)

"My name in Java is Vanderdecken. It is my legal name. I have no other. I await your answer, Mr. Johnston; and I need not remind you of what depends on it."

"You say you wish me to enter your service for three years?" I asked. "In what capacity? Is it anything illegal?"

He smiled again as he said:

"My dear Mr. Johnston, you are not wise to play with tigers too long. Your capacity will be my assistant; your duty to obey my orders for three years, no matter what I demand. Your reward will be riches. Now hear the other side. The penalty of refusal will be, not death—that is too merciful. I have given you my confidence. If you become my assistant, the confidence will be entire. I shall have no secrets from you. But—"

Here he rose and looked down on me with a baleful light in his eyes.

"You are young and in love. Is it not so? This cousin of yours, this Mamie Bruce? I saw you hesitate and blush at her name, and you evaded my questions as to her. You love her; do you not?"

I felt myself quivering, I knew not why, as he spoke. What did he mean?

"Yes," I stammered. "My God, man, if you mean to hurt her—"

"Silence," he said sharply. "Answer my question. No more. Do you love her?"

"God knows I do," said I, "but she is far above me, sir."

"Very well," he said coldly, "so much the better. You will not object to having her brought down to your level. If you refuse I shall lie here till daylight shows me the raft, when I shall kill all the men and women except your two relatives. Those I shall bring on board my ship, and give you three hours to consider. At the end of that time, if you do not consent, I shall kill the old man, and give you another hour to consider. If you do not then consent, I shall execute you, and keep your Mamie, with the rest of my girls here, as a slave. I am an Oriental, as you see, and I keep slaves. Now, sir, your answer quick. I have dallied too long to please you. Yes, or no."

I was trembling and bathed in sweat. I saw, in his calm, pitiless face, he meant what he said and would do it. I could only save my cousin and the rest by my unreserved sacrifice.

I rose up and bowed, saying:

"I consent. God forgive you, sir, for all you have done. I will serve you for three years; but I shall hate you forever."

His face cleared like magic. He looked as genial as the day as he said:

"You have decided wisely. Now, hear my promise, and remember that I never yet broke my word. You will serve me for three years, unless I sooner discharge you. In return for your services, I will not only make you rich, but I will give you the woman you love. I know human nature, and especially woman's nature, and I will make your cousin love you as you love her. Now, I require of you a pledge of secrecy and impassive obedience. Are you ready to take it?"

"I must," I said gloomily.

"Then repeat it after me," said he, coldly,

and he struck a little bell which seemed to be a signal.

In a moment the cabin was filled with wild Malays, in perfect silence. They surrounded me with gleaming eyes and drawn kreeses, which they held ready to strike over every inch of my body, as it seemed to me the eyes of every man watching me like a hungry tiger. I could not resist a slight quiver of the nerves, it was so unexpected and appalling.

Then the impassive chief remarked:

"I am about to administer the oath in Malay, after the custom of my ship. Any hesitation will insure your death and the massacre of all your friends on the raft, for while my men obey me implicitly in all else, I, like them, am subject to one law, that of self-preservation. Are you ready?"

"Yes," I said, the sweat running from every pore.

Then he pronounced, in a loud solemn tone, in Malay, the most fearful oath I ever imagined possible, and I was compelled to repeat it after him, with those swarthy demons listening intently, and interjecting at every clause the low chorus in Malay:

"God hears you, brother."

By that oath I became a passive slave in the hands of the chief, bound to do his bidding, even to the murder of every member of my family, to my own self-destruction, and when it was over at last the Malays groaned together:

"God and the devil hear you, brother. God and the devil will smite you, if you lie."

Then there was a pause of nearly a minute, those hungry eyes devouring me still, and the chief said in Malay:

"Give him the pistol."

Some one handed me a pistol.

"Put it to your left arm," commanded the chief, "and cock it."

I obeyed.

"I will see if you are a liar," he said. "Fire!"

I fired. At that moment I wished the muzzle had been at my temple. I felt ready to die.

The pistol flashed. It had but a small charge of powder, which inflicted a slight burn, but the Malays burst into an approving chorus:

"Our brother is a man. He is welcome."

The test was over apparently, for they all embraced me in their Malay fashion and went out silently as they had come, when the chief said to me:

"Eat and drink. First the bread, then the salt, then the wine."

He handed me a morsel of bread, and a pinch of salt, which we ate together, and then took each a sip from a cup of some sweet resinous wine.

"Now," he said, "you are my first officer, and the men will obey you as you obey me. Your name is Hassim, and you are a Malay who talks no English. Come on deck. It is time to disappear from sight."

He went out and I followed him. He called in Malay to his crew:

"Get the smoke bombs out, and be ready to strip the ship."

They flew at their work with the silent celerity of machines, and brought out a small brass mortar with a very light charge of powder, in which they placed a large red bombshell of pasteboard.

I had often heard of the curious Japanese day fireworks, and recognized them at once.

A crowd of men flew up the rigging and disposed themselves on the yards, while the rest climbed up on the rail and bent down to grasp something—I could not see what.

The chief watched and waited, till a voice called out in Malay:

"We are ready, dread sultan!"

"Fire and strip!" he answered.

The red bomb flew up in the air and burst into an enormous cloud of dark smoke, while the men on the yards hauled up the network and concealed it in carefully-made strips of canvas, that were evidently hung to the yards for that very purpose.

At the same time, the men on the rails hauled up and threw in-board what I saw was only an ingenious skin of canvas painted with the fiery skeleton, while every lamp on the ship went out as if by magic, and she moved away with her stern to the black smoke, silent and dark.

I felt the throbbing of a screw engine, but saw no smoke. My eyes were riveted on the other smoke astern, which hung in the still air for nearly half an hour.

When it dissipated at last, we were alone on the open sea, and I knew that we must have vanished from the sight of the poor souls on the raft.

What was to become of them, I thought, and would this man keep his word and save them?

CHAPTER II.

THE DAYS OF MY SLAVERY.

HE kept his word. Captain Hutton has, I hear, recorded the appearance of the Malay prahu that picked up the people on the raft, but he did not know who sent it. The Malay, Muda, received his orders from our chief, and his story was only partly true. He, in common

with very many intelligent natives I met, in the East, belonged to a mysterious brotherhood, of whom none knew the real chief, though I am sure in my own mind that it was Mr. Vanderdecken, as he was called in the society of Europeans.

The object of that brotherhood, which still exists, and which made itself so terribly felt in the Sepoy Mutiny, in the final destruction of British influence in the Eastern seas. It has members in every part of the Orient, Hindoos, Moslems, Parsees, Malays, Klings, Burmese, Chinese, Japanese and a great number of Eurasians, whose position, despised as they are by the whites, leads them to sympathize with the race to which their mothers belonged.

This society is Oriental to the core, patient, crafty, secretive and dangerous. Before the mutiny it believed itself able to cope with the detested foreigners in the field, but the British successes in that unhappy struggle altered the temper of its leaders. Since that day, as most people know the Chinese and Japanese have changed their policy, and now welcome all sorts of European improvements, especially in matters of military and naval warfare.

Foreign officers drill their armies; foreign weapons fill their arsenals. They buy gunboats, use the powers of steam and electricity, and appear to be advancing in the race with the rest of the world.

Much of this apparent progress is really a matter of deep laid policy. They are *biding their time*. They have found out their inability to cope with science by numbers alone, and they are patiently learning and *biding their time*.

When that time comes, the East will witness an outbreak of race hatred, to which the Sepoy mutiny was child's play, and the old scores of three hundred years will be settled, perhaps for the better of the world, possibly for the worse.

As an American, I cannot but sympathize with these so called "inferior races," to a certain extent, looking at the history of British rule in the East.

The most remarkable feature of this late change is the diplomatic skill with which these crafty Orientals play off one nation of Europe against another, with a view to their own ultimate benefit.

Their present aim seems to be to drive out the British, while they encourage French, Dutch, and American influence. But when they succeed in this, if they ever do, it will not take them long to extirpate the other and weaker powers; for they keep well informed on European politics nowadays, as General Grant found out in his interview with Prince Kung, the Chinese Premier.

But all this is beside my real story, save so far as it explains some matters in the tales of my fellow-passengers in the Spindrift. It will account for my silence and disguise before my kinsman and Mamie, and before Dr. Peters.

I was surrounded by the members of that terrible brotherhood, and my slightest movement of betrayal would have been the signal—not for my own death, for that would have been welcome—but for the sacrifice of all I held dear in the world, and for which my affection had become almost idolatrous, in my cruelly unnatural position. I dared not resist any order, however terrible.

When I was compelled to take my stand in the run of the Phantom, under the cabin-floor, with my image thrown on a pane of glass in the well-known "ghost illusion, I saw nothing of my cousin. I simply obeyed my chief's order, and pronounced the words he told me to utter. I was kept in ignorance of her condition at the time, and when I found what I had innocently done, I became so frantic that I believe I touched even Vanderdecken's flinty heart, and he swore to me that he would save the poor child's life, and that if he failed, he would set me free.

I wish to be just, even to him. This man of marble did not love cruelty for itself.

Merciless as a tiger when crossed in his designs, he yet had a heart, somewhere, and Satan himself could not have resisted the pleading helplessness of that innocent child he so nearly killed.

I think he even meant kindly to me in his experiment. He wished to invest me, in Mamie's mind, with certain imaginative attributes that might atone for my painful plainness; and I blessed him from the bottom of my heart when he permitted me to save her life by giving her my own blood. Ah! how I wished then, that Peters had taken my last drop to save her! I thought I was dying when I fainted away at that second transfusion, and I felt happy, till I woke again to face my dreary fate, and know I might never see her again; for my master was waiting for me, and I knew we were going to sea again, on a secret tour to the local chiefs of our brotherhood of Orientals.

We had been at sea when we were recalled by old Dundoo's signal, and that brings me to the strangest part of my story.

It will be remembered that the first question asked me by Vanderdecken when he heard I was from the Spindrift was:

"Is Lord Teviot on your raft?"

My cousin's narrative mentions this gentleman, and his evident abhorrence of Vanderdecken, founded on some occurrence in the Sepoy Mutiny, which had turned the heads of two young people white in a single night.

I very early found that Vanderdecken, on his part, had a hatred for Lord Teviot, even more vindictive than the Briton's for him.

Lord Teviot's name was the only thing that ever disturbed his stony calmness, and he seemed to be possessed with a determination to get him into his power, for some reason or other.

I found that it was in consequence of the name of our vessel being "Spindrift" that he had dogged us in the typhoon. He had discovered from his emissaries that Lord Teviot was coming to India in a ship called the Spindrift, and some of his men had blundered into the belief that ours was the British Spindrift.

He told me that, had he not known the typhoon was close at hand, he would have boarded our ship when he first passed us.

"And in that case," he said, "I should have had to kill you all to keep my secret. But I trusted to the typhoon, and I was right."

I saw Lord Teviot in Singapore, by the chief's directions, disguised as a Malay servant, at the Governor's palace—for the brotherhood goes everywhere, and has to-day spies in every English family and bureau.

I was instructed to note his appearance, so that I would know him anywhere, and I did so.

When I left my poor cousin for the last time, we were going to sea after Lord Teviot, who was on board the Cyclops, iron-clad, with the steam corvette Swallow for consort, and Teviot must have known Vanderdecken's ship, for, as Doctor Peters has elsewhere recorded, he chased us into the harbor of Batavia, after the lordly British fashion, because we failed to come to and submit to examination, to gratify his lordship's suspicions.

When we ran out to sea again it was night, and Vanderdecken, as soon as he was fairly out of range of the English vessels, began to throw out taunting signals in fireworks, as if to provoke them to follow.

I was too weak from recent loss of blood to do much work, and he treated me very kindly as soon as I was on board, from fear of losing my services, I suppose. I ventured to ask him why he tried to provoke the Englishman to follow him. He smiled in his placid way.

"Because I want them to follow me; that is all. Teviot—the thick-witted butcher—suspects who I am, but cannot prove it. I cannot fight them in these seas, swarming with European vessels, but once let me get them alone, out of the track of trade and I will repay his lordship the compliment he once paid some relatives of mine."

"And what was that?" I asked.

Vanderdecken clinched his teeth and his eyes glowed like a tiger's as he said slowly:

"He blew them to pieces, and the jackals picked their bones. They were high-caste princes of the Aryan race, from which we sprung, as well as your vaunted Anglo-Norman stock. We Southern Aryans believe in the sanctity of the body, and that butcher defiled my whole race. Let me but once catch him on equal terms, and he shall see that we have taken to heart the lessons they taught us after the mutiny. We are mastering their science fast, and we are ten to their one. When the time comes to strike, be sure we will show them no more mercy than they showed us after their victory."

I own that there was something in that singular man that forced my sympathy in spite of myself. He had evidently suffered some hideous wrong though I could not believe yet that he had told me all. His hatred was evident, but the cause he assigned not sufficient, to my mind.

Lord Teviot was not the only Briton that blew men from cannon in India; but he seemed to single out Teviot from all the rest as his special foe.

At all events he failed to induce the British ships to follow him into the unfrequented seas he sought. They were acting under orders, cruising on a definite station, and never molested him unless he provoked them by his defiance.

I found, when we landed, as we often did in Dutch, French or Spanish ports that he was well known as an eccentric, and thought to be the son of a Dutch planter. I once asked him how he came to bear that name, and he told me.

He had no secrets from me save one—his real personal identity—and that even I never fully penetrated though I have reason to think I know who he is, if he be yet alive, which I doubt not.

The elder Vanderdecken, it appears, was a Eurasian, his mother a Malay princess, when the Dutch held but a small portion of Java. He was a member of the brotherhood and a secret instigator of the mutiny, while on the best of terms with the whites.

At the collapse of the movement, he saved more than one native prince, and became the custodian of treasures belonging to others.

Orientals put enormous sums into precious stones on account of their value and portability, and Vanderdecken became the guardian of many millions of dollars, brought away from India in raw diamonds, hidden in the turbans and cummerbands or loin-cloths of half-naked coolies faithful to the death.

In many cases the owners never turned up to claim them, but the Eurasian kept them sacredly as a deposit, increasing them by traffic during a period of many years after the mutiny.

One high-caste prince alone made his way to Vanderdecken, eluding the vigilance of the British, who had offered a reward of a lac of rupees (\$200,000), for his capture, and brought with him an infant.

That infant was my remorseless chief, his father the proscribed rajah, and his mother—almost incredible to say—an Englishwoman of good family and wonderful beauty.

My chief once showed me her portrait, a small English "ivory-type," in a worn velvet case, preserved in a casket that blazed with gems.

I looked at the face with interest. A young, tender, loving face, with a delicate mouth, brown eyes, and fair hair.

I could not help seeing a certain likeness in the coloring to my cousin, Mamie Bruce, though the features were unlike, and the expression much more sad and thoughtful. I told him so.

He looked at me keenly, and replied:

"You are right. But for that likeness your cousin might have drowned for me. I saw in her my mother. Young man, you are not the first that has had cause to bless my mother's memory, though I never saw her with my conscious eyes."

He told me then how he had been brought up by Vanderdecken as his son and heir, his real father becoming apparently a servant in the house, and that thus he had sunk his real identity to European eyes entirely, his story being held a sacred secret by the brotherhood.

"And your father? He lives yet?" I asked him.

"He lives yet. You have seen him. The English have seen him. He laughs at them. They hunt for him in Nepal, Burmah, Siam. They know he is alive. They trace the effect of his movements. They fear him yet. But they cannot find him. Bah! these thick-witted butchers are no match for us of the Orient is craft. And yet—the Queen would give much to know that my father was dead. I am like him in face. Teviot knows it. Oh, how I longed to arrest me in Singapore! He thought he saw before him the man who once—"

Then he stopped dead short, and not a word more could I get from him in the two years in which I remained in the closest intimacy with him.

The only man in his whole following that was old enough to be his father, if his story were true, was the old Brahmin, Dhundu Punt, and he was dumb, his tongue having been cut out. I could not believe him to be the proud rajah described by his son, who had commanded armies and faced the British lion in his fury. Dhundu, or Dundoo, as Dr. Peters spells it, never came to sea with us, and passed his time at Vanderdecken's Batavia house in counting his beads and ordering the house by signs.

"How did Dhundu lose his tongue?" I once asked Vanderdecken.

"He cut it out himself," was the astounding reply. "The brotherhood demanded it as a measure of precaution, and he obeyed with a smile. Such men are hard to conquer."

"But why was it demanded?" I asked, amazed.

"Dhundu talked English too well, and it was necessary to obliterate him from the world if we hoped to succeed. He gave up speech that I might be the man I am."

Then I saw it all.

"Dhundu is your father?" I said.

"Dhundu is my father," he answered gravely. "My mother died when I was not a month old, from a pistol-shot fired by her brother."

"Her brother?" I echoed. "Oh! an accident."

"A deliberate shot, sir."

"But why—why?"

He shrugged his shoulders slightly.

"It imports not now. Race hatred. He thought she had dishonored his beggarly stock by becoming head Begum of my father's zenana, though he had put away his other wives, and loved her dearly. He, the—"

And then he stopped again, as he always did when I was near penetrating his inmost mystery, and dismissed me.

So we went on for two years and more, till one day he said to me abruptly:

"I want you to go to Paris for me."

I leaped out of my chair in amazement. I could not believe him. To Paris—out of his control!

"Can you trust me so far?" I asked him at last, when I could speak. "Remember, it will be a strong temptation to me to desert your service when I am out of your power."

He nodded not unkindly to me.

"I know it, but I also know I can trust you."

You would not tell me of the danger if you had not made up your mind to keep your oath to me. Furthermore, I know you will be faithful for another reason. My experiment on the Phantom has succeeded. Your cousin loves you."

"How do you know?" I asked him, incredulously.

"I have been in correspondence with your kinsman, Mungo Bruce, for the last two years," he said. "He knows me only as Vanderdecken but he knows you are in my power, and he has an interest in you as his sole surviving male relative, on account of some Scotch rhyme about your two families—"

I remember it well. How often had I caught myself dreaming over it:

"Johnston, sire, and Bruce for mither:
Make a bairn shall pass allither."

He saw me flush and continued with a smile.

"I have often told you I do not love needless cruelty, though I am a cruel man, as you know. I have made up my mind to reward you by giving you the woman you love, on a condition."

"Name it," I said. "Shall I be free?"

"Yes, after you perform the task I now set you. I am going to send you to Paris to find Lord Teviot. You are to give out to him that you are a deserter from my service and that you know I have a man called Dhundu Punt with me. You are to offer to show him my haunt and leave the rest to me."

"But where am I to lead him?" I asked. He handed me a slip of paper, on which were written a certain latitude and longitude.

"There," he said. "I will await him there."

"But he will not trust me," I urged.

"He will, if you give him this," he said, and he handed me a small package that felt heavy as if it contained gold. "Now listen. I have sent also to Paris through the branch house of Bruce, Hilton & Co., a sum of money to be placed to your credit in case you succeed. The day that you put Lord Teviot opposite to me in the position I have written down, no matter if he brings a fleet of iron-clads with him, you are free and will be a rich man and able to marry your cousin."

"But what guarantee have you that I may not stay away, expose you to the world and keep the money?" I asked.

"The guarantee of your love for your cousin," he said, gravely. "I have made her love you, and I send you back to her, no longer a plain, awkward boy, but a man who would be considered fine-looking. You start. Look in the glass."

I confess I had not noted the change that two years of vigorous life in the East had made in me.

I saw in the glass a well-built man with a strong beard, and beards go a great way to hide homely faces.

My hair had darkened under a tropical sun, my freckles had become one coat of tan, and for nearly a year I had dropped my Malay disguise and passed for a Parsee in Vanderdecken's service. He smiled at me in the glass.

"You see you owe me something, Johnston," he said. "Now in one word do you consent, not on your oath, but on your word and on the honor of Mamie Bruce's lover?"

He had struck the right chord at last.

"I consent," said I, "and, Mr. Vanderdecken, if I find her well and happy, I forgive you all the woe you have caused me, and I promise never to reveal anything that may harm you."

"That is needless," he said; "you cannot harm me. Say what you please, when you have done your work. But till then I hold you to your pledge."

Then he gave me detailed instructions as to how to reach Paris and find Lord Teviot in the shortest space of time possible, and when I expressed myself confident of understanding all, he held out his hand and said to me, solemnly:

"Johnston, farewell. Brothers of one race, our stocks must ever remain foes, till justice prevails on earth and force is overthrown forever. But for all that we are brothers, you and I. The time may come when you will judge me, as you judge David and Joshua, not by their slaughters, worse than mine, but by their cause. Till then, remember me when you look at the woman who will be your wife, and when you hold your first child in your arms, remember who killed my mother before you call me a demon in human shape."

Then he wrung my hand, his wonderful dark eyes glistening with the first tears I ever saw there.

An hour later I was on my way from Batavia to Calcutta in a Dutch steamer, as Mr. Hassim, of Bombay.

I never saw Vanderdecken again.

CHAPTER III.

CLOSE OF THE NARRATIVE.

I ARRIVED at Paris, and saw Lord Teviot and his wife at the Hotel de Londres. To them I was Mr. Hassim of Batavia, and I sent up a

card as such, as instructed, with the pencil-scribble, "*late in the service of Vanderdecken, with important news.*"

They sent down for me at once, and I was face to face with the bitter foes of my chief.

As I expected, they were suspicious and reticent, disposed to think me a fraud, with designs on their purses.

I told Lord Teviot that I was a deserter from Vanderdecken's service—that I knew him to be a secret pirate, that I would, if necessary, guide a ship-of-war to his haunts, and that I asked no reward but the privilege of going with the expedition.

He looked skeptical, and asked me how he was to know I had ever been in Vanderdecken's service, adding:

"All the world knows my efforts to unmask the true character of that infamous wretch, and I have been victimized by sharpers more than once on that account. I have induced naval officers to follow him, and he has outwitted us. I feel sure who he is, but I cannot prove it. Show me some evidence; if you have been in his service, you know his secrets and who he is. Show me that, and I'll follow you."

I took out the package, and I confess I trembled as I opened it. I had promised to do it and inspect the contents before handing them to Lord Teviot.

The first object I saw was the casket with the portrait in it. I opened it, gave it to Lord Teviot, and, as I did so, a paper fell out which I picked up, and said:

"Do you recognize that face, sir?"

Lord Teviot opened it, and he and his wife glanced eagerly at it.

Then the lady gave a faint shriek, and would have fallen but for her husband's arm. As for him, he was trembling like a leaf and white as ashes, but not with fear.

It was in the intensity of rage that he hissed out:

"Sir, do you know the original of that picture?"

I had been glancing over the paper in the mean time, and I answered, reading:

"This is the portrait of Caroline Teviot, sister to Douglas Teviot, who was shot dead by her brother for having married the Rajah Dhundu of Bithoor, during the mutiny, to save her family from extermination. Her son is now known as Philip Vanderdecken, and his father as Dhundu Punt."

Then I saw why Vanderdecken hated Teviot, and Teviot was no whit behind him in abhorrence.

His handsome face was gray with passion, and he hissed out:

"By heavens, sir, if you came to taunt me with the weakness of that poor creature who held life dearer than honor, I swear—"

But I was up and looking down at him as firmly as himself, and I knew I could pitch him out of the window if I wanted.

"Moderate your tone, sir," I said. "I come to give you your revenge if you please, not to be threatened. You know that in the lapse of time since the mutiny passions have cooled down. Vanderdecken is not ashamed of his origin. He is capable of coming to Paris to proclaim it, and you know that if he does, Europe will not permit England to seize either him or his father for acts of warfare. There is only one way to silence him, and I offer you that. No one but you knows of this picture and the crime you committed in your madness—"

"No, no," interrupted his wife, shuddering, "we thought she perished in the great massacre at Cawnpore. At least—"

"At least you did," he interrupted, bitterly. "Yes. You are like all women. I had to hide it from you as well as the rest. Could I have faced the world with my sister's shame trumpeted over India? My sister the willing slave of that—Bah!"

He foamed at the mouth in his fury of race hatred. I never realized before how false notions of honor can drive men insane.

Then he said in a low, hoarse tone to her:

"I knew this Vanderdecken was his son, but, God's my witness, I did not dream she was his mother. The spawn of that lecherous vermin of Bithoor, ready to tell the world he is my nephew! My God! I shall go mad with shame! He must be put out of the way or life is not worth having. And Dhundu, too. Alive yet! The reward stands yet, Constance, three lacs! It will make me. And the reputation, too! To capture the man who has escaped us all these years."

He turned abruptly to me.

"I beg your pardon for my violence. I'll go with you to the end of the earth to find that monster Dhundu and crush out this stain on my line. Tell me every particular."

"But first," said I, "tell me one thing. Who in the world is this Dhundu?"

He started back and stared at me as if petrified.

"What! You a Parsee, and never heard of Dhundu Punt? Then you are no Parsee."

"I am not," I said. "I am an American Scot, and my name is Mungo Johnston. I will tell you the rest another time. Now, sir, who is

this Dhundu Punt and why all this reward offered for him?"

He looked round apprehensively.

"Some one may hear us, Constance," he said. "If it gets out he will be warned and escape, as he has so many times before. Secrecy, sir, secrecy. Promise never to tell the name till we have him and I will whisper it in your ear."

I promised readily, for I saw the policy of his remark. For Dhundu Punt I had no regard. He might have been anything bad and I had no wish to save him.

"I promise," said I.

Then he whispered in my ear a name identified with such fearful atrocities that I too started and cried:

"He! Great heavens! Do you mean it? Why, I thought he was dead."

"So have many more," said Lord Teviot, with a grim smile, "but the devil takes care of his own. Now, sir, you see why I have cause to hate him."

"I do," said I, "and if I can help you to get hold of him, I shall be doing a good service to humanity, I know."

That is all that passed between us before we entered on our business and laid our plans to capture Vanderdecken and the—I cannot say whom, since my promise to Lord Teviot, for as the reader of these pages knows we did not catch Dhundu.

All I have to say is this; pick out for yourself in recent history the name of the man most completely execrated by the British in India; *that is the man*. Find a synonym for merciless ferocity; *that is his name*.

Lord Teviot and I went out that afternoon in the Bois de Boulogne as the best place to talk amid the confusion of carriages, and I recognized the Hyatts and found that, if I did not wish a general discovery, I must get off.

He agreed with feverish eagerness and off we went by rail to Marseilles and thence to the Suez Canal and India, which we crossed by rail and found the Eastern Squadron at Calcutta with our old friends the Cyclops and Swallow just fitted out for a cruise.

Lord Teviot's name was a power in India, and when he told his news in confidence to the authorities, the ironclad and her consort were given us with feverish eagerness.

The capture of the much sought-after Rajah of Bithoor was certain to enlist every Englishman who hated a Hindoo, that is ninety-five per cent. of the Anglo-Indian population.

Thirty-six hours later we were steaming for the destination I had given near a small island between the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

There as I had told them, we ran into Vanderdecken and they had a fair chance, West against East, force against craft and stratagem.

Denyse has recorded the result of that battle. We did not capture Dhundu; but Vanderdecken, after encouraging us till we grew careless by his mimic flight, turned on us with his terrible rocket-float-torpedoes and destroyed both ships with a suddenness appalling even in these days of science.

In the boat that fled from the scene of disaster were two sailors, one officer, Lord Teviot and myself.

I think, had it not been for the coming of Denyse's steamer, I should have been spared and Teviot executed, for I heard the Malays yelling to me to stop; "that they wouldn't hurt; me that the chief had sent them."

I think he was sorry, believing I had been killed, but if so, he has heard different ere this, for he has spies all over the East, and some in Europe.

In fact, I knew it since I began to write this narrative, for Bruce, Hilton & Co. have received orders from him, through their Paris house, to pay to me a large sum of money, enough to enable me to take my place as an equal partner in the house, which will hereafter be known as Bruce, Johnston, Hilton & Co.

Have I any more to tell? I hardly know. The general public can have but little interest in the private love affairs of a red-haired young man, with a plain face.

Let me rather tell of others.

Denyse is married, and his wife made an amicable settlement with Dr. Sam, whose bark was always worse than his bite, and who behaved generously as soon as his fair enemy owned her weakness and cried for mercy.

I think Sam Peters will marry well some day, for he is one of the noblest fellows in the world, and too sensible to degenerate into a sarcastic old bachelor.

One more fact, and I have finished. Sam is to be my best man when Mamie and I are married, which will be on the 1st of April next.

He says, in his cynical way, that the day is exceedingly appropriate, and hopes it will end our folly.

Are we fools? I hope not.

If love is folly, we are; but I am content to be called anything now, for—

Mamie loves me!

MUNGO JOHNSTON.

THE END.

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